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Childe Harold and Other Poems

By
Lord Byron

With a Critical and Biographical Introduction
by Francis Hovey Stoddard

Illustrated



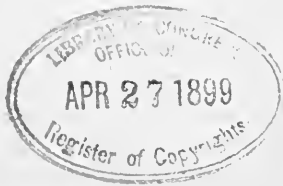
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KINGTIME.

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And she, whom once the semblance of a scar
Appalled, an owlet's larum chilled with dread,
Now views the column-scattering bayonet jar,
The falchion flash, and o'er the yet warm dead
(Stalks with Minerva's step where Mars might quake to tread.)

LV

Ye who shall marvel when you hear her tale,
Oh! had you known her in her softer hour,
Marked her black eye that mocks her coal-black veil,
Heard her light, lively tones in lady's bower,
Seen her long locks that foil the painter's power,
Her fairy form, with more than female grace,
Scarce would you deem that Saragoza's tower
Beheld her smile in Danger's Gorgon face,
Thin the closed ranks, and lead in Glory's fearful chase.

LVI

Her lover sinks—she sheds no ill-timed tear;
Her chief is slain—she fills his fatal post;
Her fellows flee—she checks their base career;
The foe retires—she heads the sallying host:
Who can appease like her a lover's ghost?
Who can avenge so well a leader's fall?
What maid retrieve when man's flushed hope is lost?
Who hang so fiercely on the flying Gaul,
Foiled by a woman's hand, before a battered wall?

LVII

Yet are Spain's maids no race of Amazons,
But formed for all the witching arts of love:
Though thus in arms they emulate her sons,
And in the horrid phalanx dare to move,
'Tis but the tender fierceness of the dove,
Pecking the hand that hovers o'er her mate:
In softness as in firmness far above
Remoter females, famed for sickening prate;
Her mind is nobler sure, her charms perchance as great.

LVIII

The seal Love's dimpling finger hath impressed
Denotes how soft that chin which bears his touch:
Her lips, whose kisses pout to leave their nest,
Bid man be valiant ere he merit such:
Her glance, how wildly beautiful! how much
Hath Phœbus wooed in vain to spoil her cheek,
Which glows yet smoother from his amorous clutch!
Who round the North for paler dames would seek?
How poor their forms appear! how languid, wan, and weak!

LIX

Match me, ye climes! which poets love to laud;
Match me, ye harems of the land! where now
I strike my strain, far distant, to applaud
Beauties that even a cynic must avow!
Match me those houris, whom ye scarce allow
To taste the gale lest Love should ride the wind,
With Spain's dark-glancing daughters—deign to know,
There your wise Prophet's paradise we find,
His black-eyed maids of Heaven, angelically kind.

LX

Oh thou, Parnassus! whom I now survey,
Not in the frenzy of a dreamer's eye,
Not in the fabled landscape of a lay,
But soaring snow-clad through thy native sky,
In the wild pomp of mountain majesty!
What marvel if I thus essay to sing?
The humblest of thy pilgrims passing by
Would gladly woo thine Echoes with his string,
Though from thy heights no more one Muse will wave her wing.

LXI

Oft have I dreamed of thee! whose glorious name
Who knows not, knows not man's divinest lore:
And now I view thee, 'tis, alas! with shame
That I in feeblest accents must adore.
When I recount thy worshippers of yore
I tremble, and can only bend the knee;
Nor raise my voice, nor vainly dare to soar,
But gaze beneath thy cloudy canopy
In silent joy to think at last I look on thee!

LXII

Happier in this than mightiest bards have been,
Whose fate to distant homes confined their lot,
Shall I unmoved behold the hallowed scene,
Which others rave of, though they know it not?
Though here no more Apollo haunts his grot,
And thou, the Muses' seat, art now their grave,
Some gentle spirit still pervades the spot,
Sighs in the gale, keeps silence in the cave,
And glides with glassy foot o'er yon melodious wave.

LXIII

Of thee hereafter.—Even amid my strain
I turned aside to pay my homage here;

Forgot the land, the sons, the maids of Spain :
Her fate, to every free-born bosom dear ;
And hailed thee, not perchance without a tear.
Now to my theme—but from thy holy haunt
Let me some remnant, some memorial bear ;
Yield me one leaf of Daphne's deathless plant,
Nor let thy votary's hope be deemed an idle vaunt.

LXIV

But ne'er didst thou, fair Mount ! when Greece was young,
See round thy giant base a brighter choir,
Nor e'er did Delphi, when her priestess sung
The Pythian hymn with more than mortal fire,
Behold a train more fitting to inspire
The song of love than Andalusia's maids,
Nurst in the glowing lap of soft desire :
Ah ! that to these were given such peaceful shades
As Greece can still bestow, though Glory fly her glades.

LXV

Fair is proud Seville ; let her country boast
Her strength, her wealth, her site of ancient days ;
But Cadiz, rising on the distant coast,
Calls forth a sweeter, though ignoble praise.
(Ah, Vice ! how soft are thy voluptuous ways !
While boyish blood is mantling, who can 'scape
The fascination of thy magic gaze ?
A Cherub-hydra round us dost thou gape,
And mould to every taste thy dear delusive shape.)

LXVI

When Paphos fell by Time—accursèd Time !
The Queen who conquers all must yield to thee—
The Pleasures fled, but sought as warm a clime ;
And Venus, constant to her native sea,
To naught else constant, hither deigned to flee,
And fixed her shrine within these walls of white ;
Though not to one dome circumscribeth she
Her worship, but, devoted to her rite,
A thousand altars rise, forever blazing bright.

LXVII

From morn till night, from night till startled Morn,
Peeps blushing on the revel's laughing crew,
The song is heard, the rosy garland worn ;
Devices quaint, and frolics ever new,

Tread on each other's kibes. A long adieu
 He bids to sober joy that here sojourns:
 Naught interrupts the riot, though in lieu
 Of true devotion monkish incense burns,
 And love and prayer unite, or rule the hour by turns.

LXVIII

The Sabbath comes, a day of blessed rest;
 What hallows it upon this Christian shore?
 Lo! it is sacred to a solemn feast:
 Hark! heard you not the forest monarch's roar?
 Crashing the lance, he snuffs the spouting gore
 Of man and steed, o'erthrown beneath his horn;
 The thronged arena shakes with shouts for more;
 Yells the mad crowd o'er entrails freshly torn,
 Nor shrinks the female eye, nor even affects to mourn.

LXIX

The seventh day this; the jubilee of man.
 London! right well thou know'st the day of prayer:
 Then thy spruce citizen, washed artisan,
 And smug apprentice gulp their weekly air:
 Thy coach of hackney, whisky, one-horse chair,
 And humblest gig through sundry suburbs whirl;
 To Hampstead, Brentford, Harrow, make repair;
 Till the tired jade the wheel forgets to hurl,
 Provoking envious gibe from each pedestrian churl.

LXX

Some o'er thy Thamis row the ribboned fair,
 Others along the safer turnpike fly;
 Some Richmond-hill ascend, some scud to Ware,
 And many to the steep of Highgate hie.
 Ask ye, Bæotian shades! the reason why?
 'Tis to the worship of the solemn Horn,
 Grasped in the holy hand of Mystery,
 In whose dread name both men and maids are sworn,
 And consecrate the oath with draught, and dance till morn.

LXXI

All have their fooleries—not alike are thine,
 Fair Cadiz, rising o'er the dark blue sea!
 Soon as the matin bell proclaimeth nine,
 Thy saint adorers count the rosary:
 Much is the VIRGIN teased to shrive them free
 (Well do I ween the only virgin there)
 From crimes as numerous as her beadsmen be;
 Then to the crowded circus forth they fare:
 Young, old, high, low, at once the same diversion share.

LXXII

The lists are oped, the spacious area cleared,
Thousands on thousands piled are seated round ;
Long ere the first loud trumpet's note is heard,
No vacant space for lated wight is found :
Here dons, grandees, but chiefly dames abound,
Skilled in the ogle of a roguish eye,
Yet ever well inclined to heal the wound ;
None through their cold disdain are doomed to die,
As moon-struck bards complain, by Love's sad archery.

LXXIII

Hushed is the din of tongues—on gallant steeds,
With milk-white crest, gold spur, and light-poised lance,
Four cavaliers prepare for venturous deeds,
And lowly bending to the lists advance ;
Rich are their scarfs, their chargers featly prance :
If in the dangerous game they shine to-day,
The crowd's loud shout and ladies' lovely glance,
Best prize of better acts, they bear away,
And all that kings or chiefs e'er gain their toils repay.

LXXIV

In costly sheen and gaudy cloak arrayed,
But all afoot, the light-limbed Matadore
Stands in the centre, eager to invade
The lord of lowing herds ; but not before
The ground, with cautious tread, is traversed o'er,
Lest aught unseen should lurk to thwart his speed :
His arms a dart, he fights aloof, nor more
Can man achieve without the friendly steed—
Alas ! too oft condemned for him to bear and bleed.

LXXV

Thrice sounds the clarion ; lo ! the signal falls,
The den expands, and Expectation mute
Gapes round the silent circle's peopled walls.
Bounds with one lashing spring the mighty brute,
And wildly staring, spurns, with sounding foot,
The sand, nor blindly rushes on his foe :
Here, there, he points his threatening front, to suit
His first attack, wide waving to and fro
His angry tail ; red rolls his eye's dilated glow.

LXXVI

Sudden he stops ; his eye is fixed : away,
Away, thou heedless boy ! prepare the spear ;

Now is thy time, to perish, or display
The skill that yet may check his mad career.
With well-timed croupe the nimble coursers veer;
On foams the bull, but not unscathed he goes;
Streams from his flank the crimson torrent clear:
He flies, he wheels, distracted with his throes:
Dart follows dart; lance, lance; loud bellowings speak his woes.

LXXVII

Again he comes; nor dart nor lance avail,
Nor the wild plunging of the tortured horse;
Though man and man's avenging arms assail,
Vain are his weapons, vainer is his force,
One gallant steed is stretched a mangled corse;
Another, hideous sight! unseamed appears,
His gory chest unveils life's panting source;
Though death-struck, still his feeble frame he rears;
Staggering, but stemming all, his lord unharmed he bears.

LXXVIII

Foiled, bleeding, breathless, furious to the last,
Full in the centre stands the bull at bay,
Mid wounds, and clinging darts, and lances brast,
And foes disabled in the brutal fray:
And now the Matadores around him play,
Shake the red cloak, and poise the ready brand:
Once more through all he bursts his thundering way—
Vain rage! the mantle quits the conynge hand,
Wraps his fierce eye—'tis past—he sinks upon the sand.

LXXIX

Where his vast neck just mingles with the spine,
Sheathed in his form the deadly weapon lies.
He stops—he starts—disdaining to decline:
Slowly he falls, amid triumphant cries,
Without a groan, without a struggle dies.
The decorated car appears—on high
The corse is piled—sweet sight for vulgar eyes—
Four steeds that spurn the rein, as swift as shy,
Hurl the dark bulk along, scarce seen in dashing by.

LXXX

Such the ungentle sport that oft invites
The Spanish maid, and cheers the Spanish swain:
Nurtured in blood betimes, his heart delights
In vengeance, gloating on another's pain.

What private feuds the troubled village stain !
Though now one phalanx'd host should meet the foe,
Enough, alas ! in humble homes remain,
To meditate 'gainst friends the secret blow,
For some slight cause of wrath, whence life's warm stream
must flow.

LXXXI

But Jealousy has fled : his bars, his bolts,
His withered sentinel, Duenna sage !
And all whereat the generous soul revolts,
Which the stern dotard deemed he could encage,
Have passed to darkness with the vanished age.
Who late so free as Spanish girls were seen,
(Ere War uprose in his volcanic rage),
With braided tresses bounding o'er the green,
While on the gay dance shone Night's lover-loving Queen ?

LXXXII

Oh ! many a time and oft had Harold loved,
Or dreamed he loved, since rapture is a dream ;
But now his wayward bosom was unmoved,
For not yet had he drunk of Lethe's stream :
And lately had he learned with truth to deem
Love has no gift so grateful as his wings :
How fair, how young, how soft soe'er he seem,
Full from the fount of Joy's delicious springs
Some bitter o'er the flowers its bubbling venom flings.

LXXXIII

Yet to the beauteous form he was not blind,
Though now it moved him as it moves the wise ;
Not that Philosophy on such a mind
E'er deigned to bend her chastely-awful eyes :
But Passion raves itself to rest, or flies ;
And Vice, that digs her own voluptuous tomb,
Had buried long his hopes, no more to rise :
Pleasure's palled victim ! life-abhorring gloom
Wrote on his faded brow curst Cain's unresting doom.

LXXXIV

Still he beheld, nor mingled with the throng ;
But viewed them not with misanthropic hate :
Fain would he now have joined the dance, the song ;
But who may smile that sinks beneath his fate ?
Naught that he saw his sadness could abate :
Yet once he struggled 'gainst the demon's sway,
And as in Beauty's bower he pensive sate,
Poured forth this unpremeditated lay,
To charms as fair as those that soothed his happier day.

TO INEZ

Nay, smile not at my sullen brow;
Alas! I can not smile again:
Yet Heaven avert that ever thou
Shouldst weep, and haply weep in vain.

And dost thou ask, what secret woe
I bear, corroding joy and youth?
And wilt thou vainly seek to know
A pang, even thou must fail to soothe?

It is not love, it is not hate,
Nor low Ambition's honours lost,
That bids me loathe my present state,
And fly from all I prized the most:

It is that weariness which springs
From all I meet, or hear, or see:
To me no pleasure Beauty brings;
Thine eyes have scarce a charm for me.

It is that settled, ceaseless gloom
The fabled Hebrew wanderer bore:
That will not look beyond the tomb,
But can not hope for rest before.

What Exile from himself can flee?
To zones, though more and more remote,
Still, still pursues, where'er I be,
The blight of life—the demon Thought.

Yet others rapt in pleasure seem,
And taste of all that I forsake;
Oh! may they still of transport dream,
And ne'er, at least like me, awake!

Through many a clime 'tis mine to go,
With many a retrospection curst;
And all my solace is to know,
Whate'er betides, I've known the worst.

What is that worst? Nay, do not ask—
In pity from the search forbear:
Smile on—nor venture to unmask
Man's heart, and view the Hell that's there.

LXXXV

Adieu, fair Cadiz! yea, a long adieu!
Who may forget how well thy walls have stood?

When all were changing thou alone wert true,
First to be free, and last to be subdued :
And if amidst a scene, a shock so rude,
Some native blood was seen thy streets to dye ;
A traitor only fell beneath the feud :
Here all were noble, save Nobility ;
None hugged a conqueror's chain, save fallen Chivalry !

LXXXVI

Such be the sons of Spain, and strange her fate !
They fight for freedom, who were never free ;
A kingless people for a nerveless state,
Her vassals combat when their chieftains flee.
True to the veriest slaves of Treachery ;
Fond of a land which gives them naught but life,
Pride points the path that leads to liberty ;
Back to the struggle, baffled in the strife ;
War, war is still the cry, " War even to the knife ! "

LXXXVII

Ye, who would more of Spain and Spaniards know,
Go, read whate'er is writ of bloodiest strife :
Whate'er keen Vengeance urged on foreign foe
Can act, is acting there against man's life :
From flashing scimeter to secret knife,
War mouldeth there each weapon to his need—
So may he guard the sister and the wife,
So may he make each curst oppressor bleed,
So may such foes deserve the most remorseless deed !

LXXXVIII

Flows there a tear of pity for the dead ?
Look o'er the ravage of the reeking plain :
Look on the hands with female slaughter red ;
Then to the dogs resign the unburied slain,
Then to the vulture let each corse remain ;
Albeit unworthy of the prey-bird's maw,
Let their bleached bones, and blood's unbleaching stain,
Long mark the battle-field with hideous awe :
Thus only may our sons conceive the scenes we saw !

LXXXIX

Nor yet, alas ! the dreadful work is done ;
Fresh legions pour adown the Pyrenees :
It deepens still, the work is scarce begun,
Nor mortal eye the distant end foresees.

Fallen nations gaze on Spain ; if freed, she frees
 More than her fell Pizarros once enchained :
 Strange retribution ! now Columbia's ease
 Repairs the wrongs that Quito's sons sustained,
 While o'er the parent clime prowls Murder unrestrained.

XC

Not all the blood at Talavera shed,
 Not all the marvels of Barossa's fight,
 Not Albuera lavish of the dead,
 Have won for Spain her well-asserted right.
 When shall her Olive-Branch be free from blight ?
 When shall she breathe her from the blushing toil ?
 How many a doubtful day shall sink in night,
 Ere the Frank robber turn him from his spoil,
 And Freedom's stranger-tree grow native of the soil ?

XCI

And thou, my friend !—since unavailing woe
 Bursts from my heart, and mingles with the strain—
 Had the sword laid thee with the mighty low,
 Pride might forbid e'en Friendship to complain :
 But thus unlaureled to descend in vain,
 By all forgotten, save the lonely breast,
 And mix unbleeding with the boasted slain,
 While glory crowns so many a meaner crest !
 What hadst thou done to sink so peacefully to rest ?

XCII

Oh, known the earliest, and esteemed the most !
 Dear to a heart where naught was left so dear !
 Though to my hopeless days forever lost,
 In dreams deny me not to see thee here !
 And Morn in secret shall renew the tear
 Of Consciousness awaking to her woes,
 And Fancy hover o'er thy bloodless bier,
 Till my frail frame return to whence it rose,
 And mourned and mourner lie united in repose.

XCIII

Here is one fytte of Harold's pilgrimage :
 Ye who of him may further seek to know,
 Shall find some tidings in a future page,
 If he that rhymeth now may scribble moe.
 Is this too much ? stern Critic ! say not so :
 Patience ! and ye shall hear what he beheld
 In other lands, where he was doomed to go :
 Lands that contain the monuments of Eld,
 Ere Greece and Grecian arts by barbarous hands were quelled.

CANTO THE SECOND

I

COME, blue-eyed maid of heaven!—but thou, alas!
Didst never yet one mortal song inspire—
Goddess of Wisdom! here thy temple was,
And is, despite of war and wasting fire,
And years, that bade thy worship to expire:
But worse than steel, and flame, and ages slow,
Is the dread sceptre and dominion dire
Of men who never felt the sacred glow
That thoughts of thee and thine on polished breasts bestow.

II

Ancient of days! august Athena! where,
Where are thy men of might? thy grand in soul?
Gone—glimmering through the dream of things that were:
First in the race that led to Glory's goal,
They won, and passed away—is this the whole?
A schoolboy's tale, the wonder of an hour!
The warrior's weapon and the sophist's stole
Are sought in vain, and o'er each mouldering tower,
Dim with the mist of years, gray flits the shade of power.

III

Son of the morning, rise! approach you here!
Come—but molest not yon defenceless urn:
Look on this spot—a nation's sepulchre!
Abode of gods, whose shrines no longer burn.
Even gods must yield—religions take their turn;
'Twas Jove's—'tis Mohammed's—and other creeds
Will rise with other years, till man shall learn
Vainly his incense soars, his victim bleeds;
Poor child of Doubt and Death, whose hope is built on reeds.

IV

Bound to the earth, he lifts his eye to heaven—
Is't not enough, unhappy thing! to know
Thou art? Is this a boon so kindly given,
That being, thou wouldst be again, and go,
Thou know'st not, reck'st not to what region, so
On earth no more, but mingled with the skies!
Still wilt thou dream on future joy and woe?
Regard and weigh yon dust before it flies:
That little urn saith more than thousand homilies.

V

Or burst the vanished hero's lofty mound ;
Far on the solitary shore he sleeps :
He fell, and falling nations mourned around ;
But now not one of saddening thousands weeps,
Nor warlike worshipper his vigil keeps
Where demi-gods appeared, as records tell.
Remove yon skull from out the scattered heaps :
Is that a temple where a God may dwell ?
Why even the worm at last disdains her shattered cell !

VI

Look on its broken arch, its ruined wall,
Its chambers desolate, and portals foul :
Yes, this was once Ambition's airy hall,
The dome of Thought, the palace of the Soul :
Behold through each lack-lustre, eyeless hole,
The gay recess of Wisdom and of Wit,
And Passion's host, that never brooked control :
Can all saint, sage, or sophist ever writ,
People this lonely tower, this tenement refit ?

VII

Well didst thou speak, Athena's wisest son !
"All that we know is, nothing can be known."
Why should we shrink from what we can not shun ?
Each hath his pang, but feeble sufferers groan
With brain-born dreams of evil all their own.
Pursue what Chance or Fate proclaimeth best ;
Peace waits us on the shores of Acheron :
There no forced banquet claims the sated guest,
But Silence spreads the couch of ever-welcome rest.

VIII

Yet if, as holiest men have deemed, there be
A land of souls beyond that sable shore,
To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee
And sophists, madly vain of dubious lore ;
How sweet it were in concert to adore
With those who made our mortal labours light !
To hear each voice we feared to hear no more !
Behold each mighty shade revealed to sight,
The Bactrian, Samian sage, and all who taught the right !

IX

There, thou !—whose love and light together fled,
Have left me here to love and live in vain—

Twined with my heart, and can I deem thee dead,
When busy memory flashes on my brain?
Well—I will dream that we may meet again,
And woo the vision to my vacant breast:
If aught of young Remembrance then remain,
Be as it may Futurity's behest,
For me 'twere bliss enough to know thy spirit blest!

X

Here let me sit upon this massy stone,
The marble column's yet unshaken base!
Here, son of Saturn! was thy favourite throne!
Mightiest of many such! Hence let me trace
The latent grandeur of thy dwelling-place.
It may not be: nor even can Fancy's eye
Restore what Time hath laboured to deface.
Yet these proud pillars claim no passing sigh;
Unmoved the Moslem sits, the light Greek carols by.

XI

But who, of all the plunderers of yon fane
On high, where Pallas lingered, loath to flee,
The latest relic of her ancient reign;
The last, the worst, dull spoiler, who was he?
Blush, Caledonia! such thy son could be!
England! I joy no child he was of thine:
Thy free-born men should spare what once was free;
Yet they could violate each saddening shrine,
And bear these altars o'er the long-reluctant brine.

XII

But most the modern Pict's ignoble boast,
To rive what Goth, and Turk, and Time hath spared:
Cold as the crags upon his native coast,
His mind as barren and his heart as hard,
Is he whose head conceived, whose hand prepared,
Aught to displace Athena's poor remains:
Her sons too weak the sacred shrine to guard,
Yet felt some portion of their mother's pains,
And never knew, till then, the weight of Despot's chains.

XIII

What! shall it e'er be said by British tongue,
Albion was happy in Athena's tears?
Though in thy name the slaves her bosom wrung,
Tell not the deed to blushing Europe's ears;

The ocean queen, the free Britannia, bears
The last poor plunder from a bleeding land :
Yes, she, whose generous aid her name endears,
Tore down those remnants with a harpy's hand,
Which envious Eld forbore, and tyrants left to stand.

XIV

Where was thine Ægis, Pallas ! that appalled
Stern Alaric and Havoc on their way ?
Where Peleus' son ? whom Hell in vain enthralled,
His shade from Hades upon that dread day
Bursting to light in terrible array !
What ! could not Pluto spare the chief once more,
To scare a second robber from his prey ?
Idly he wandered on the Stygian shore,
Nor now preserved the walls he loved to shield before.

XV

Cold is the heart, fair Greece ! that looks on thee,
Nor feels as lovers o'er the dust they loved ;
Dull is the eye that will not weep to see
Thy walls defaced, thy mouldering shrines removed
By British hands, which it had best behooved
To guard those relics ne'er to be restored.
Curst be the hour when from their isle they roved,
And once again thy hapless bosom gored,
And snatched thy shrinking gods to northern climes abhorred.

XVI

But where is Harold ? shall I then forget
To urge the gloomy wanderer o'er the wave ?
Little recked he of all that men regret ;
No loved one now in feigned lament could rave ;
No friend the parting hand extended gave,
Ere the cold stranger passed to other climes :
Hard is his heart whom charms may not enslave ;
But Harold felt not as in other times,
And left without a sigh the land of war and crimes.

XVII

He that has sailed upon the dark blue sea,
Has viewed at times, I ween, a full fair sight ;
When the fresh breeze is fair as breeze may be,
The white sail set, the gallant frigate tight ;
Masts, spires, and strand retiring to the right.

The glorious main expanding o'er the bow,
The convoy spread like wild swans in their flight,
The dullest sailer wearing bravely now,
So gaily curl the waves before each dashing prow.

XVIII

And oh, the little warlike world within!
The well-reeved guns, the netted canopy,
The hoarse command, the busy humming din,
When, at a word, the tops are manned on high:
Hark to the Boatswain's call, the cheering cry!
While through the seaman's hand the tackle glides;
Or schoolboy midshipman that, standing by,
Strains his shrill pipe, as good or ill betides,
And well the docile crew that skilful urchin guides.

XIX

White is the glassy deck, without a stain,
Where on the watch the staid Lieutenant walks:
Look on that part which sacred doth remain
For the lone chieftain, who majestic stalks,
Silent and feared by all—not oft he talks
With aught beneath him, if he would preserve
That strict restraint, which broken, ever balks
Conquest and Fame: but Britons rarely swerve
From law, however stern, which tends their strength to nerve.

XX

Blow! swiftly blow, thou keel-compelling gale!
Till the broad sun withdraws his lessening ray;
Then must the pennant-bearer slacken sail,
That lagging barks may make their lazy way.
Ah! grievance sore, and listless dull delay,
To waste on sluggish hulks the sweetest breeze!
What leagues are lost before the dawn of day,
Thus loitering pensive on the willing seas,
The flapping sail hauled down to halt for logs like these!

XXI

The moon is up; by Heaven a lovely eve!
Long streams of light o'er dancing waves expand;
Now lads on shore may sigh, and maids believe:
Such be our fate when we return to land!
Meantime some rude Arion's restless hand
Wakes the brisk harmony that sailors love;
A circle there of merry listeners stand,
Or to some well-known measure fealty move,
Thoughtless, as if on shore they still were free to rove.

XXII

Through Calpe's straits survey the steepy shore;
Europe and Afric on each other gaze!
Lands of the dark-eyed Maid and dusky Moor
Alike beheld beneath pale Hecate's blaze:
How softly on the Spanish shore she plays,
Disclosing rock, and slope, and forest brown,
Distinct, though darkening with her waning phase;
But Mauritania's giant shadows frown,
From mountain-cliff to coast descending sombre down.

XXIII

'Tis night, when Meditation bids us feel
We once have loved, though love is at an end:
The heart, lone mourner of its baffled zeal,
Though friendless now, will dream it had a friend.
Who with the weight of years would wish to bend,
When Youth itself survives young Love and joy?
Alas! when mingling souls forget to blend,
Death hath but little left him to destroy!
Ah! happy years! once more who would not be a boy?

XXIV

Thus bending o'er the vessel's laving side,
To gaze on Dian's wave-reflected sphere,
The soul forgets her schemes of Hope and Pride,
And flies unconscious o'er each backward year.
None are so desolate but something dear,
Dearer than self, possesses or possessed
A thought, and claims the homage of a tear;
A flashing pang! of which the weary breast
Would still, albeit in vain, the heavy heart divest.

XXV

To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,
To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,
Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,
And mortal foot hath ne'er or rarely been;
To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,
With the wild flock that never needs a fold;
Alone o'er steep and foaming falls to lean;
This is not solitude; 'tis but to hold
Converse with Nature's charms, and view her stores unrolled.

XXVI

But 'midst the crowd, the hum, the shock of men,
To hear, to see, to feel, and to possess,

And roam along, the world's tired denizen,
With none who bless us, none whom we can bless;
Minions of splendour shrinking from distress!
None that, with kindred consciousness endued,
If we were not, would seem to smile the less
Of all that flattered, followed, sought, and sued;
This is to be alone; this, this is solitude!

XXVII

More blest the life of godly eremite,
Such as on lonely Athos may be seen,
Watching at eve upon the giant height,
Which looks o'er waves so blue, skies so serene,
That he who there at such an hour hath been
Will wistful linger on that hallowed spot;
Then slowly tear him from the 'witching scene,
Sigh forth one wish that such had been his lot,
Then turn to hate a world he had almost forgot.

XXVIII

Pass we the long, unvarying course, the track
Oft trod, that never leaves a trace behind;
Pass we the calm, the gale, the change, the tack,
And each well-known caprice of wave and wind;
Pass we the joys and sorrows sailors find,
Cooped in their winged, sea-girt citadel;
The foul, the fair, the contrary, the kind,
As breezes rise and fall and billows swell,
Till on some jocund morn—lo, land! and all is well.

XXIX

But not in silence pass Calypso's isles,
The sister tenants of the middle deep;
There for the weary still a haven smiles,
Though the fair goddess long hath ceased to weep,
And o'er her cliffs a fruitless watch to keep
For him who dared prefer a mortal bride:
Here, too, his boy essayed the dreadful leap
Stern Mentor urged from high to yonder tide;
While thus of both bereft, the nymph-queen doubly sighed.

XXX

Her reign is past, her gentle glories gone:
But trust not this; too easy youth, beware!
A mortal sovereign holds her dangerous throne,
And thou may'st find a new Calypso there.

Sweet Florence ! could another ever share
This wayward, loveless heart, it would be thine :
But checked by every tie, I may not dare
To cast a worthless offering at thy shrine,
Nor ask so dear a breast to feel one pang for mine.

XXXI

Thus Harold deemed, as on that lady's eye
He looked, and met its beam without a thought,
Save Admiration glancing harmless by :
Love kept aloof, albeit not far remote,
Who knew his votary often lost and caught,
But knew him as his worshipper no more,
And ne'er again the boy his bosom sought :
Since now he vainly urged him to adore,
Well deemed the little god his ancient sway was o'er.

XXXII

Fair Florence found, in sooth with some amaze,
One who, 'twas said, still sighed to all he saw,
Withstand, unmoved, the lustre of her gaze,
Which others hailed with real or mimic awe,
Their hope, their doom, their punishment, their law ;
All that gay Beauty from her bondsmen claims :
And much she marvelled that a youth so raw
Nor felt, nor feigned at least, the oft-told flames,
Which, though sometimes they frown, yet rarely anger dames.

XXXIII

Little knew she that seeming marble heart,
Now masked in silence or withheld by pride,
Was not unskilful in the spoiler's art,
And spread its snares licentious far and wide ;
Nor from the base pursuit had turned aside,
As long as aught was worthy to pursue :
But Harold on such arts no more relied ;
And had he doted on those eyes so blue,
Yet never would he join the lover's whining crew.

XXXIV

Not much he kens, I ween, of woman's breast,
Who thinks that wanton thing is won by sighs ;
What careth she for hearts when once possessed ?
Do proper homage to thine idol's eyes ;
But not too humbly, or she will despise
Thee and thy suit, though told in moving tropes ;
Disguise even tenderness, if thou art wise ;
Brisk Confidence still best with woman copes ;
Pique her and soothe in turn, soon Passion crowns thy hopes.

XXXV

'Tis an old lesson ; time approves it true,
And those who know it best deplore it most ;
When all is won that all desire to woo,
The paltry prize is hardly worth the cost :
Youth wasted, minds degraded, honour lost,
These are thy fruits, successful Passion ! these !
If, kindly cruel, early hope is crost,
Still to the last it rankles, a disease,
Not to be cured when love itself forgets to please.

XXXVI

Away ! nor let me loiter in my song,
For we have many a mountain-path to tread,
And many a varied shore to sail along,
By pensive Sadness, not by Fiction, led—
Climes, fair withal as ever mortal head
Imagined in its little schemes of thought ;
Or e'er in new Utopias were read,
To teach man what he might be, or he ought ;
If that corrupted thing could ever such be taught.

XXXVII

Dear Nature is the kindest mother still,
Though always changing, in her aspect mild :
From her bare bosom let me take my fill,
Her never-weaned, though not her favoured child.
Oh ! she is fairest in her features wild,
Where nothing polished dares pollute her path :
To me by day or night she ever smiled,
Though I have marked her when none other hath,
And sought her more and more, and loved her best in wrath.

XXXVIII

Land of Albania ! where Iskander rose !
Theme of the young, and beacon of the wise,
And he his namesake, whose oft-baffled foes
Shrunk from his deeds of chivalrous emprise :
Land of Albania ! let me bend mine eyes
On thee, thou rugged nurse of savage men !
The cross descends, thy minarets arise,
And the pale crescent sparkles in the glen,
Through many a cypress grove within each city's ken.

XXXIX

Childe Harold sailed, and passed the barren spot,
Where sad Penelope o'erlooked the wave ;

And onward viewed the mount, not yet forgot,
The lover's refuge, and the Lesbian's grave.
Dark Sappho! could not verse immortal save
That breast imbued with such immortal fire!
Could she not live who life eternal gave?
If life eternal may await the lyre,
That only Heaven to which Earth's children may aspire.

XL

'Twas on a Grecian autumn's gentle eve
Childe Harold hailed Leucadia's cape afar;
A spot he longed to see, nor cared to leave:
Oft did he mark the scenes of vanished war,
Actium, Lepanto, fatal Trafalgar:
Mark them unmoved, for he would not delight
(Born beneath some remote inglorious star)
In themes of bloody fray, or gallant fight,
But loathed the bravo's trade, and laughed at martial wight.

XLI

But when he saw the evening star above
Leucadia's far-projecting rock of woe,
And hailed the last resort of fruitless love,
He felt, or deemed he felt, no common glow:
And as the stately vessel glided slow
Beneath the shadow of that ancient mount,
He watched the billow's melancholy flow,
And, sunk albeit in thought as he was wont,
More placid seemed his eye, and smooth his pallid front.

XLII

Morn dawns; and with it stern Albania's hills,
Dark Sulî's rocks, and Pindus' inland peak,
Robed half in mist, bedewed with snowy rills,
Arrayed in many a dun and purple streak,
Arise; and, as the clouds along them break,
Disclose the dwelling of the mountaineer:
Here roams the wolf, the eagle whets his beak,
Birds, beasts of prey, and wilder men appear,
And gathering storms around convulse the closing year.

XLIII

Now Harold felt himself at length alone,
And bade to Christian tongues a long adieu:
Now he adventured on a shore unknown,
Which all admire, but many dread to view:

His breast was armed 'gainst fate, his wants were few ;
Peril he sought not, but ne'er shrank to meet :
The scene was savage, but the scene was new ;
This made the ceaseless toil of travel sweet,
Beat back keen winter's blast, and welcomed summer's heat.

XLIV

Here the red cross, for still the cross is here,
Though sadly scoffed at by the circumcised,
Forgets that pride to pampered priesthood dear ;
Churchman and votary alike despised.
Foul Superstition ! howsoe'er disguised,
Idol, saint, virgin, prophet, crescent, cross,
For whatsoever symbol thou art prized,
Thou sacerdotal gain, but general loss !
Who from true worship's gold can separate thy dross ?

XLV

Ambracia's gulf behold, where once was lost
A world for woman, lovely, harmless thing !
In yonder rippling bay, their naval host,
Did many a Roman chief and Asian king
To doubtful conflict, certain slaughter bring :
Look where the second Cæsar's trophies rose !
Now, like the hands that reared them, withering ;
Imperial anarchs, doubling human woes !
God ! was thy globe ordained for such to win and lose ?

XLVI

From the dark barriers of that rugged clime,
Even to the centre of Illyria's vales,
Childe Harold passed o'er many a mount sublime,
Through lands scarce noticed in historic tales ;
Yet in famed Attica such lovely dales
Are rarely seen ; nor can fair Tempe boast
A charm they know not ; loved Parnassus fails,
Though classic ground and consecrated most,
To match some spots that lurk within this luring coast.

XLVII

He passed bleak Pindus, Acherusia's lake,
And left the primal city of the land,
And onward did his farther journey take
To greet Albania's chief, whose dread command
Is lawless law ; for with a bloody hand
He sways a nation, turbulent and bold :
Yet here and there some daring mountain-band
Disdain his power, and from their rocky hold
Hurl their defiance far, nor yield, unless to gold.

XLVIII

Monastic Zitza! from thy shady brow,
Thou small, but favoured spot of holy ground!
Where'er we gaze, around, above, below,
What rainbow tints, what magic charms are found:
Rock, river, forest, mountain all abound,
And bluest skies that harmonize the whole:
Beneath, the distant torrent's rushing sound
Tells where the volumed cataract doth roll
Between those hanging rocks, that shock yet please the soul.

XLIX

Amid the grove that crowns yon tufted hill,
Which, were it not for many a mountain nigh
Rising in lofty ranks, and loftier still,
Might well itself be deemed of dignity,
The convent's white walls glisten fair on high:
Here dwells the caloyer, nor rude is he,
Nor niggard of his cheer; the passer by
Is welcome still; nor needless will he flee
From hence, if he delight kind Nature's sheen to see.

L

Here in the sultriest season let him rest,
Fresh is the green beneath those aged trees;
Here winds of gentlest wing will fan his breast,
From heaven itself he may inhale the breeze:
The plain is far beneath—oh! let him seize
Pure pleasure while he can; the scorching ray
Here pierceth not, impregnate with disease:
Then let his length the loitering pilgrim lay,
And gaze, untired, the morn, the noon, the eve away.

LI

Dusky and huge, enlarging on the sight,
Nature's volcanic amphitheatre,
Chimæra's Alps extend from left to right:
Beneath, a living valley seems to stir;
Flocks play, trees wave, streams flow, the mountain fir
Nodding above; behold black Acheron!
Once consecrated to the sepulchre.
Pluto! if this be hell I look upon,
Close shamed Elysium's gates, my shade shall seek for none.

LII

Ne city's towers pollute the lovely view;
Unseen is Yanina, though not remote,

Veiled by the screen of hills: here men are few,
Scanty the hamlet, rare the lonely cot;
But, peering down each precipice, the goat
Browseth: and, pensive o'er his scattered flock,
The little shepherd in his white capote
Doth lean his boyish form along the rock,
Or in his cave awaits the tempest's short-lived shock.

LIII

Oh! where, Dodona! is thine aged grove,
Prophetic fount, and oracle divine?
What valley echoed the response of Jove?
What trace remaineth of the Thunderer's shrine?
All, all forgotten—and shall man repine
That his frail bonds to fleeting life are broke?
Cease, fool! the fate of gods may well be thine:
Wouldst thou survive the marble or the oak?
When nations, tongues, and worlds must sink beneath the
stroke!

LIV

Epirus' bounds recede, and mountains fail;
Tired of up-gazing still, the wearied eye
Reposes gladly on as smooth a vale
As ever Spring yclad in grassy die:
Even on a plain no humble beauties lie,
Where some bold river breaks the long expanse,
And woods along the banks are waving high,
Whose shadows in the glassy waters dance,
Or with the moonbeam sleep in midnight's solemn trance.

LV

The sun had sunk behind vast Tomerit,
The Laos wide and fierce came rolling by;
The shades of wonted night were gathering yet,
When, down the steep banks winding warily
Childe Harold saw, like meteors in the sky,
The glittering minarets of Tepalen,
Whose walls o'erlook the stream; and drawing nigh,
He heard the busy hum of warrior-men
Swelling the breeze that sighed along the lengthening glen.

LVI

He passed the sacred haram's silent tower,
And underneath the wide o'erarching gate
Surveyed the dwelling of this chief of power,
Where all around proclaimed his high estate.

Amid no common pomp the despot sate,
 While busy preparation shook the court,
 Slaves, eunuchs, soldiers, guests, and santons wait;
 Within, a palace, and without a fort:
 Here men of every clime appear to make resort.

LVII

Richly caparisoned, a ready row
 Of armed horse, and many a warlike store,
 Circled the wide-extending court below;
 Above, strange groups adorned the corridor;
 And oft-times through the area's echoing door,
 Some high-capped Tartar spurred his steed away:
 The Turk, the Greek, the Albanian, and the Moor,
 Here mingled in their many-hued array,
 While the deep war-drum's sound announced the close of day.

LVIII

The wild Albanian kirtled to his knee,
 With shawl-girt head and ornamented gun,
 And gold-embroidered garments, fair to see:
 The crimson-scarfèd men of Macedon;
 The Delhi with his cap of terror on,
 And crooked glaive; the lively, supple Greek
 And swarthy Nubia's mutilated son;
 The bearded Turk, that rarely deigns to speak,
 Master of all around, too potent to be meek,

LIX

Are mixed conspicuous: some recline in groups,
 Scanning the motley scene that varies round;
 There some grave Moslem to devotion stoops,
 And some that smoke, and some that play, are found;
 Here the Albanian proudly treads the ground;
 Half-whispering there the Greek is heard to prate;
 Hark! from the mosque the nightly solemn sound,
 The Muezzin's call doth shake the minaret,
 "There is no god but God!—to prayer—lo! God is great!"

LX

Just at this season Ramazani's fast
 Through the long day its penance did maintain.
 But when the lingering twilight hour was past,
 Revel and feast assumed the rule again:
 Now all was bustle, and the menial train
 Prepared and spread the plenteous board within;
 The vacant gallery now seemed made in vain,
 But from the chambers came the mingling din,
 As page and slave anon were passing out and in.

LXI

Here woman's voice is never heard; apart,
And scarce permitted, guarded, veiled, to move,
She yields to one her person and her heart,
Tamed to her cage, nor feels a wish to rove:
For, not unhappy in her master's love,
And joyful in a mother's gentlest cares,
Blest cares! all other feelings far above!
Herself more sweetly rears the babe she bears,
Who never quits the breast, no meaner passion shares.

LXII

In marble-paved pavilion, where a spring
Of living water from the centre rose,
Whose bubbling did a genial freshness fling,
And soft voluptuous couches breathed repose,
Ali reclined, a man of war and woes:
Yet in his lineaments ye can not trace,
While Gentleness her milder radiance throws
Along that aged venerable face,
The deeds that lurk beneath, and stain him with disgrace.

LXIII

It is not that yon hoary lengthening beard
Ill suits the passions which belong to youth:
Love conquers age—so Hafiz hath averred,
So sings the Teian, and he sings in sooth—
But crimes that scorn the tender voice of ruth,
Beseeming all men ill, but most the man
In years, have marked him with a tiger's tooth:
Blood follows blood, and through their mortal span,
In bloodier acts conclude those who with blood began.

LXIV

'Mid many things most new to ear and eye
The pilgrim rested here his weary feet,
And gazed around on Moslem luxury,
Till quickly wearied with that spacious seat
Of Wealth and Wantonness, the choice retreat
Of sated Grandeur from the city's noise:
And were it humbler, it in sooth were sweet;
But Peace abhorreth artificial joys,
And Pleasure, leagued with Pomp, the zest of both destroys.

LXV

Fierce are Albania's children, yet they lack
Not virtues, were those virtues more mature.

Where is the foe that ever saw their back ?
Who can so well the toil of war endure ?
Their native fastnesses not more secure
Than they in doubtful time of troublous need :
Their wrath how deadly ! but their friendship sure,
When Gratitude or Valour bids them bleed,
Unshaken rushing on where'er their chief may lead.

LXVI

Childe Harold saw them in their chieftain's tower,
Thronging to war in splendour and success ;
And after viewed them, when, within their power,
Himself awhile the victim of distress ;
That saddening hour when bad men hotlier press :
But these did shelter him beneath their roof,
When less barbarians would have cheered him less
And fellow-countrymen have stood aloof—
In aught that tries the heart how few withstand the proof !

LXVII

It chanced that adverse winds once drove his bark
Full on the coast of Suli's shaggy shore,
When all around was desolate and dark ;
To land was perilous, to sojourn more ;
Yet for awhile the mariners forbore,
Dubious to trust where treachery might lurk :
At length they ventured forth, though doubting sore
That those who loathe alike the Frank and Turk
Might once again renew their ancient butcher-work.

LXVIII

Vain fear ! the Suliotes stretched the welcome hand,
Led them o'er rocks and past the dangerous swamp,
Kinder than polished slaves though not so bland,
And piled the hearth, and wrung their garments damp,
And filled the bowl, and trimmed the cheerful lamp,
And spread their fare : though homely, all they had :
Such conduct bears Philanthropy's rare stamp—
To rest the weary and to soothe the sad,
Doth lesson happier men, and shames at least the bad.

LXIX

It came to pass, that when he did address
Himself to quit at length this mountain-land,
Combined marauders half-way barred egress,
And wasted far and near with glaive and brand :

And therefore did he take a trusty band
To traverse Acarnania's forest wide,
In war well seasoned, and with labours tanned,
Till he did greet white Achelous' tide,
And from his further bank Ætolia's wolds espied.

LXX

Where lone Utraikey forms its circling cove,
And weary waves retire to gleam at rest,
How brown the foliage of the green hill's grove,
Nodding at midnight o'er the calm bay's breast,
As winds come whispering lightly from the west,
Kissing, not ruffling, the blue deep's serene:
Here Harold was received a welcome guest;
Nor did he pass unmoved the gentle scene,
For many a joy could he from Night's soft presence glean.

LXXI

On the smooth shore the night-fires brightly blazed,
The feast was done, the red wine circling fast,
And he that unawares had there ygazed
With gaping wonderment had stared aghast;
For ere night's midmost, stillest hour was past,
The native revels of the troop began;
Each Palikar his sabre from him cast,
And bounding hand in hand, man linked to man,
Yelling their uncouth dirge, long danced the kirtled clan.

LXXII

Childe Harold at a little distance stood,
And viewed, but not displeased, the revelrie,
Nor hated harmless mirth, however rude:
In sooth, it was no vulgar sight to see
Their barbarous, yet their not indecent, glee:
And, as the flames along their faces gleamed,
Their gestures nimble, dark eyes flashing free,
The long wild locks that to their girdles streamed,
While thus in concert they this lay half sang, half screamed:

TAMBOURGI! Tambourgi! thy larum afar
Gives hope to the valiant, and promise of war;
All the sons of the mountains arise at the note,
Chimariot, Illyrian, and dark Suliote!

Oh! who is more brave than a dark Suliote,
In his snowy camese and his shaggy capote?
To the wolf and the vulture he leaves his wild flock,
And descends to the plain like the stream from the rock.

Shall the sons of Chimari, who never forgive
The fault of a friend, bid an enemy live?
Let those guns so unerring such vengeance forego?
What mark is so fair as the breast of a foe?

Macedonia sends forth her invincible race;
For a time they abandon the cave and the chase:
But those scarfs of blood-red shall be redder, before
The sabre is sheathed and the battle is o'er.

Then the pirates of Parga that dwell by the waves,
And teach the pale Franks what it is to be slaves,
Shall leave on the beach the long galley and oar,
And track to his covert the captive on shore.

I ask not the pleasures that riches supply,
My sabre shall win what the feeble must buy;
Shall win the young bride with her long flowing hair,
And many a maid from her mother shall tear.

I love the fair face of the maid in her youth,
Her caresses shall lull me, her music shall soothe;
Let her bring from her chamber the many-toned lyre,
And sing us a song on the fall of her sire.

Remember the moment when Previsa fell,
The shrieks of the conquered, the conquerors' yell;
The roofs that we fired, and the plunder we shared,
The wealthy we slaughtered, the lovely we spared.

I talk not of mercy, I talk not of fear;
He neither must know who would serve the Vizier:
Since the days of our Prophet the Crescent ne'er saw
A chief ever glorious like Ali Pashaw.

Dark Muchtar his son to the Danube is sped,
Let the yellow-haired Giaours view his horse-tail with dread,
When his Delhis come dashing in blood o'er the banks,
How few shall escape from the Muscovite ranks!

Selictar! unsheathe then our chief's cimetar:
Tambourgi! thy larum gives promise of war.
Ye mountains, that see us descend to the shore,
Shall view us as victors, or view us no more!

LXXIII

Fair Greece! sad relic of departed worth!
Immortal, though no more; though fallen, great;
Who now shall lead thy scattered children forth,
And long accustomed bondage uncreate?

Not such thy sons who whilome did await,
The hopeless warriors of a willing doom,
In bleak Thermopylæ's sepulchral strait—
Oh! who that gallant spirit shall resume,
Leap from Eurotas' banks, and call thee from the tomb?

LXXIV

Spirit of Freedom! when on Phyle's brow
Thou sat'st with Thrasybulus and his train,
Couldst thou forebode the dismal hour which now
Dims the green beauties of thine Attic plain?
Not thirty tyrants now enforce the chain,
But every carle can lord it o'er thy land;
Nor rise thy sons, but idly rail in vain,
Trembling beneath the scourge of Turkish hand,
From birth till death enslaved; in word, in deed, unmanned.

LXXV

In all save form alone, how changed! and who
That marks the fire still sparkling in each eye,
Who but would deem their bosoms burned anew
With thy unquenched beam, lost Liberty!
And many dream withal the hour is nigh
That gives them back their father's heritage:
For foreign arms and aid they fondly sigh,
Nor solely dare encounter hostile rage,
Or tear their name defiled from Slavery's mournful page.

LXXVI

Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not
Who would be free themselves must strike the blow?
By their right arms the conquest must be wrought?
Will Gaul or Muscovite redress ye? no!
True, they may lay your proud despoilers low,
But not for you will Freedom's altars flame.
Shades of the Helots! triumph o'er your foe:
Greece! change thy lords, thy state is still the same;
Thy glorious day is o'er, but not thine years of shame.

LXXVII

The city won for Allah from the Giaour,
The Giaour from Othman's race again may wrest;
And the Serai's impenetrable tower
Receive the fiery Frank, her former guest;
Or Wahab's rebel brood, who dared divest
The Prophet's tomb of all its pious spoil,
May wind their path of blood along the West;
But ne'er will freedom seek this fated soil,
But slave succeed to slave through years of endless toil.

LXXVIII

Yet mark their mirth—ere lenten days begin,
 That penance which their holy rites prepare
 To shrive from man his weight of mortal sin,
 By daily abstinence and nightly prayer;
 But ere his sackcloth garb Repentance wear,
 Some days of joyaunce are decreed to all,
 To take of pleasaunce each his secret share,
 In motley robe to dance at masking ball,
 And join the mimic train of merry Carnival.

LXXIX

And whose more rife with merriment than thine,
 O Stamboul! once the empress of their reign?
 Though turbans now pollute Sophia's shrine,
 And Greece her very altars eyes in vain:
 (Alas! her woes will still pervade my strain!)
 Gay were her minstrels once, for free her throng,
 All felt the common joy they now must feign,
 Nor oft I've seen such sight, nor heard such song,
 As wooed the eye and thrilled the Bosphorus along.

LXXX

Loud was the lightsome tumult on the shore,
 Oft Music changed, but never ceased her tone,
 And timely echoed back the measured oar,
 And rippling waters made a pleasant moan:
 The Queen of tides on high consenting shone,
 And when a transient breeze swept o'er the wave,
 'Twas, as if darting from her heavenly throne,
 A brighter glance her form reflected gave,
 Till sparkling billows seemed to light the banks they lave.

LXXXI

Glanced many a light caique along the foam,
 Danced on the shore the daughters of the land,
 Ne thought had man or maid of rest or home,
 While many a languid eye and thrilling hand
 Exchanged the look few bosoms may withstand,
 Or gently prest, returned the pressure still:
 Oh Love! young Love! bound in thy rosy band,
 Let sage or cynic prattle as he will,
 These hours, and only these, redeem Life's years of ill!

LXXXII

But, midst the throng in merry masquerade,
 Lurk there no hearts that throb with secret pain,
 Even through the closest searment half-betrayed?
 To such the gentle murmurs of the main

Seem to re-echo all they mourn in vain ;
 To such the gladness of the gamesome crowd
 Is source of wayward thought and stern disdain :
 How do they loathe the laughter idly loud,
 And long to change the robe of revel for the shroud !

LXXXIII

This must he feel, the true-born son of Greece,
 If Greece one true-born patriot still can boast :
 Not such as prate of war, but skulk in peace,
 The bondsman's peace, who sighs for all he lost,
 Yet with smooth smile his tyrant can accost,
 And wield the slavish sickle, not the sword :
 Ah ! Greece ! they love thee least who owe thee most ;
 Their birth, their blood, and that sublime record
 Of hero sires, who shame thy now degenerate horde !

LXXXIV

When riseth Lacedæmon's hardihood,
 When Thebes Epaminondas rears again,
 When Athens' children are with hearts endued,
 When Grecian mothers shall give birth to men,
 Then mayst thou be restored ; but not till then.
 A thousand years scarce serve to form a state ;
 An hour may lay it in the dust : and when
 Can man its shattered splendour renovate,
 Recall its virtues back, and vanquish Time and Fate ?

LXXXV

And yet how lovely in thine age of woe,
 Land of lost gods and godlike men—art thou !
 Thy vales of evergreen, thy hills of snow,
 Proclaim thee Nature's varied favourite now ;
 Thy fanes, thy temples to thy surface bow,
 Commingling slowly with heroic earth,
 Broke by the share of every rustic plough :
 So perish monuments of mortal birth,
 So perish all in turn, save well-recorded Worth ;

LXXXVI

Save where some solitary column mourns
 Above its prostrate brethren of the cave ;
 Save where Tritonia's airy shrine adorns
 Colonna's cliff, and gleams along the wave ;
 Save o'er some warrior's half-forgotten grave,
 Where the gray stones and unmolested grass
 Ages, but not oblivion, feebly brave,
 While strangers only not regardless pass,
 Lingering like me, perchance, to gaze, and sigh "Alas !"

LXXXVII

Yet are thy skies as blue, thy crags as wild :
 Sweet are thy groves, and verdant are thy fields,
 Thine olive ripe as when Minerva smiled,
 And still his honeyed wealth Hymettus yields ;
 There the blithe bee his fragrant fortress builds,
 The freeborn wanderer of thy mountain air ;
 Apollo still thy long, long summer gilds,
 Still in his beam Mendeli's marbles glare ;
 Art, Glory, Freedom fail, but Nature still is fair.

LXXXVIII

Where'er we tread 'tis haunted, holy ground ;
 No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,
 But one vast realm of wonder spreads around,
 And all the Muse's tales seem truly told,
 Till the sense aches with gazing to behold
 The scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon :
 Each hill and dale, each deepening glen and wold
 Defies the power which crushed thy temples gone :
 Age shakes Athena's tower, but spares gray Marathon.

LXXXIX

The sun, the soil, but not the slave, the same ;
 Unchanged in all except its foreign lord—
 Preserves alike its bounds and boundless fame ;
 The battle-field, where Persia's victim horde
 First bowed beneath the brunt of Hellas' sword,
 As on the morn to distant Glory dear,
 When Marathon became a magic word ;
 Which uttered, to the hearer's eye appear
 The camp, the host, the fight, the conqueror's career.

XC

The flying Mede, his shaftless broken bow ;
 The fiery Greek, his red pursuing spear ;
 Mountains above, Earth's, Ocean's plain below ;
 Death in the front, Destruction in the rear !
 Such was the scene—what now remaineth here ?
 What sacred trophy marks the hallowed ground,
 Recording Freedom's smile and Asia's tear ?
 The rifled urn, the violated mound,
 The dust thy courser's hoof, rude stranger ! spurns around.

XCI

Yet to the remnants of thy splendour past
 Shall pilgrims, pensive, but unwearied, throng ;
 Long shall the voyager, with the Ionian blast,
 Hail the bright clime of battle and of song ;

Long shall thine annals and immortal tongue
Fill with thy fame the youth of many a shore:
Boast of the aged! lesson of the young!
Which sages venerate and bards adore,
As Pallas and the Muse unveil their awful lore.

XCII

The parted bosom clings to wonted home,
If aught that's kindred cheer the welcome hearth;
He that is lonely, hither let him roam,
And gaze complacent on congenial earth.
Greece is no lightsome land of social mirth;
But he whom Sadness sootheth may abide,
And scarce regret the region of his birth,
When wandering slow by Delphi's sacred side,
Or gazing o'er the plains where Greek and Persian died.

XCIII

Let such approach this consecrated land,
And pass in peace along the magic waste:
But spare its relics—let no busy hand
Deface the scenes, already how defaced!
Not for such purpose were these altars placed.
Revere the remnants nations once revered:
So may our country's name be undisgraced,
So mayst thou prosper where thy youth was reared,
By every honest joy of love and life endeared!

XCIV

For thee, who thus in too protracted song
Hath soothed thine idlesse with inglorious lays,
Soon shall thy voice be lost amid the throng
Of louder minstrels in these later days:
To such resign the strife for fading bays—
Ill may such contest now the spirit move
Which heeds nor keen reproach nor partial praise,
Since cold each kinder heart that might approve,
And none are left to please when none are left to love.

XCV

Thou too art gone, thou loved and lovely one!
Whom youth and youth's affections bound to me;
Who did for me what none beside have done,
Nor shrank from one albeit unworthy thee.
What is my being? thou hast ceased to be!
Nor staid to welcome here thy wanderer home,
Who mourns o'er hours which we no more shall see—
Would they had never been, or were to come!
Would he had ne'er returned to find fresh cause to roam!

XCVI

Oh! ever loving, lovely, and beloved!
 How selfish Sorrow ponders on the past,
 And clings to thoughts now better far removed!
 But Time shall tear thy shadow from me last.
 All thou couldst have of mine, stern Death! thou hast
 The parent, friend, and now the more than friend;
 Ne'er yet for one thine arrows flew so fast,
 And grief with grief continuing still to blend,
 Hath snatched the little joy that life had yet to lend.

XCVII

Then must I plunge again into the crowd,
 And follow all that Peace disdains to seek?
 Where Revel calls, and Laughter, vainly loud,
 False to the heart, distorts the hollow cheek,
 To leave the flagging spirit doubly weak!
 Still o'er the features, which perforce they cheer,
 To feign the pleasure or conceal the pique;
 Smiles form the channel of a future tear,
 Or raise the writhing lip with ill-dissembled sneer.

XCVIII

What is the worst of woes that wait on age?
 What stamps the wrinkle deeper on the brow?
 To view each loved one blotted from life's page,
 And be alone on earth, as I am now.
 Before the Chastener humbly let me bow,
 O'er hearts divided and o'er hopes destroyed:
 Roll on, vain days! full reckless may ye flow,
 Since Time hath reft whate'er my soul enjoyed,
 And with the ills of Eld mine earlier years alloyed.

CANTO THE THIRD

“Afin que cette application vous forçât de penser à autre chose; il n’y a en vérité de remède que celui-là et le temps.”—Lettre du Roi de Prusse à D’Alembert, September 7, 1776.

I

Is thy face like thy mother’s, my fair child!
 Ada! sole daughter of my house and heart?
 When last I saw thy young blue eyes they smiled,
 And then we parted—not as now we part,
 But with a hope.—

Awaking with a start,
The waters heave around me; and on high
The winds lift up their voices: I depart,
Whither I know not; but the hour's gone by,
When Albion's lessening shores could grieve or glad mine eye.

II

Once more upon the waters! yet once more!
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed
That knows his rider. Welcome to their roar!
Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it lead!
Though the strained mast should quiver as a reed,
And the rent canvas fluttering strew the gale,
Still must I on; for I am as a weed,
Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam, to sail
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail.

III

In my youth's summer I did sing of one,
The wandering outlaw of his own dark mind;
Again I seize the theme, then but begun,
And bear it with me, as the gushing wind
Bears the cloud onward: in that tale I find
The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,
Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind,
O'er which all heavily the journeying years
Plod the last sands of life—where not a flower appears.

IV

Since my young days of passion—joy, or pain,
Perchance my heart and harp have lost a string,
And both may jar: it may be, that in vain
I would essay as I have sung to sing.
Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling,
So that it wean me from the weary dream
Of selfish grief or gladness—so it fling
Forgetfulness around me—it shall seem
To me, though to none else, a not ungrateful theme.

V

He, who grown aged in this world of woe,
In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of life,
So that no wonder waits him; nor below
Can love, or sorrow, fame, ambition, strife,
Cut to his heart again with the keen knife
Of silent, sharp endurance: he can tell
Why thought seeks refuge in lone caves, yet rife
With airy images, and shapes which dwell
Still unimpaired, though old, in the soul's haunted cell.

VI

'Tis to create, and in creating live
 A being more intense, that we endow
 With form our fancy, gaining as we give
 The life we image, even as I do now.
 What am I? Nothing: but not so art thou,
 Soul of my thought! with whom I traverse earth,
 Invisible but gazing, as I glow
 Mixed with thy spirit, blended with thy birth,
 And feeling still with thee in my crushed feelings' dearth.

VII

Yet must I think less wildly:—I have thought
 Too long and darkly, till my brain became,
 In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
 A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame:
 And thus, untaught in youth my heart to tame,
 My springs of life were poisoned. 'Tis too late!
 Yet am I changed; though still enough the same
 In strength to bear what time can not abate,
 And feed on bitter fruits without accusing Fate.

VIII

Something too much of this:—but now 'tis past,
 And the spell closes with its silent seal.
 Long-absent Harold reappears at last;
 He of the breast which fain no more would feel,
 Wrung with the wounds which kill not, but ne'er heal;
 Yet Time, who changes all, had altered him
 In soul and aspect as in age: years steal
 Fire from the mind as vigour from the limb;
 And life's enchanted cup but sparkles near the brim.

IX

His had been quaffed too quickly, and he found
 The dregs were wormwood; but he filled again,
 And from a purer fount, on holier ground,
 And deemed its spring perpetual; but in vain!
 Still round him clung invisibly a chain
 Which galled forever, fettering though unseen,
 And heavy though it clanked not; worn with pain,
 Which pined although it spoke not, and grew keen,
 Entering with every step he took through many a scene.

X

Secure in guarded coldness, he had mixed
 Again in fancied safety with his kind,
 And deemed his spirit now so firmly fixed
 And sheathed with an invulnerable mind,

That, if no joy, no sorrow lurked behind;
And he, as one, might 'midst the many stand
Unheeded, searching through the crowd to find
Fit speculation; such as in strange land
He found in wonder-works of God and Nature's hand.

XI

But who can view the ripened rose, nor seek
To wear it? who can curiously behold
The smoothness and the sheen of beauty's cheek,
Nor feel the heart can never all grow old?
Who can contemplate Fame through clouds unfold
The star which rises o'er her steep, nor climb?
Harold, once more within the vortex, rolled
On with the giddy circle, chasing Time,
Yet with a nobler aim than in his youth's fond prime.

XII

But soon he knew himself the most unfit
Of men to herd with Man; with whom he held
Little in common; untaught to submit
His thoughts to others, though his soul was quelled
In youth by his own thoughts; still uncompelled,
He would not yield dominion of his mind,
To spirits against whom his own rebelled;
Proud though in desolation; which could find
A life within itself, to breathe without mankind.

XIII

Where rose the mountains, there to him were friends;
Where rolled the ocean, thereon was his home;
Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, extends,
He had the passion and the power to roam;
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
Were unto him companionship; they spake
A mutual language, clearer than the tome
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft forsake
For Nature's pages glassed by sunbeams on the lake.

XIV

Like the Chaldean, he could watch the stars,
Till he had peopled them with beings bright
As their own beams; and earth, and earth-born jars,
And human frailties, were forgotten quite:
Could he have kept his spirit to that flight
He had been happy; but this clay will sink
Its spark immortal, envying it the light
To which it mounts, as if to break the link
That keeps us from yon heaven which woos us to its brink.

XV

But in Man's dwellings he became a thing
 Restless and worn, and stern and wearisome,
 Drooped as a wild-born falcon with clipt wing,
 To whom the boundless air alone were home:
 Then came his fit again, which to o'ercome,
 As eagerly the barred-up bird will beat
 His breast and beak against his wiry dome—
 Till the blood tinge his plumage, so the heat
 Of his impeded soul would through his bosom eat.

XVI

7 Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again,
 With naught of hope left, but with less of gloom;
 The very knowledge that he lived in vain,
 That all was over on this side the tomb,
 Had made Despair a smilingness assume,
 Which, though 'twere wild—as on the plundered wreck
 When mariners would madly meet their doom
 With draughts intemperate on the sinking deck—
 Did yet inspire a cheer, which he forbore to check.

XVII

Stop! for thy tread is on an Empire's dust!
 An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below!
 Is the spot marked with no colossal bust?
 Nor column trophied for triumphal show?
 None; but the moral's truth tells simpler so,
 As the ground was before, thus let it be;—
 How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!
 And is this all the world has gained by thee,
 Thou first and last of fields! king-making Victory?

XVIII

And Harold stands upon this place of skulls,
 The grave of France, the deadly Waterloo!
 How in an hour the power which gave annuls
 Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting too!
 In "pride of place" here last the eagle flew,
 Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,
 Pierced by the shaft of banded nations through;
 Ambition's life and labours all were vain;
 He wears the shattered links of the world's broken chain.

XIX

Fit retribution! Gaul may champ the bit
 And foam in fetters;—but is Earth more free?
 Did nations combat to make *One* submit;
 Or league to teach all kings true sovereignty?

What! shall reviving thralldom again be
The patched-up idol of enlightened days?
Shall we, who struck the Lion down, shall we
Pay the Wolf homage? proffering lowly gaze
And servile knees to thrones? No; prove before ye praise!

XX

If not, o'er one fallen despot boast no more!
In vain fair cheeks were furrowed with hot tears
For Europe's flowers long rooted up before
The trampler of her vineyards; in vain years
Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,
Have all been borne, and broken by the accord
Of roused-up millions: all that most endears
Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes a sword
Such as Harmodius drew on Athens' tyrant lord.

XXI

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!

XXII

Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—
But, hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

XXIII

Within a windowed niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deemed it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretched his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell:
He rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

XXIV

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated: who would guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise!

XXV

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
While thronged the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips—"The foe! They come! they
come!"

XXVI

And wild and high the "Cameron's gathering" rose,
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes:
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears!

XXVII

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with Nature's tear-drops, as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave—alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valour, rolling on the foe,
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

XXVIII

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,

The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
The morn the marshalling in arms—the day
Battle's magnificently stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
The earth is covered thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heaped and pent,
Rider and horse—friend, foe—in one red burial blent!

XXIX

Their praise is hymned by loftier harps than mine;
Yet one I would select from that proud throng,
Partly because they blend me with his line,
And partly that I did his sire some wrong,
And partly that bright names will hallow song;
And his was of the bravest, and when showered
The death-bolts deadliest the thinned files along,
Even where the thickest of war's tempest lowered,
They reached no nobler breast than thine, young, gallant
Howard!

XXX

There have been tears and breaking hearts for thee,
And mine were nothing, had I such to give;
But when I stood beneath the fresh green tree,
Which living waves where thou didst cease to live,
And saw around me the wide field revive
With fruits and fertile promise, and the Spring
Come forth her work of gladness to contrive,
With all her reckless birds upon the wing,
I turned from all she brought to those she could not bring.

XXXI

I turned to thee, to thousands, of whom each
And one as all a ghastly gap did make
In his own kind and kindred, whom to teach
Forgetfulness were mercy for their sake;
The Archangel's trump, not Glory's, must awake
Those whom they thirst for; though the sound of Fame
May for a moment soothe, it can not slake
The fever of vain longing, and the name
So honoured, but assumes a stronger, bitterer claim.

XXXII

They mourn, but smile at length: and, smiling, mourn:
The tree will wither long before it fall;
The hull drives on, though mast and sail be torn;
The roof-tree sinks, but moulders on the hall

In massy hoariness; the ruined wall
Stands when its wind-worn battlements are gone;
The bars survive the captive they enthrall;
The day drags through though storms keep out the sun;
And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on:

xxxiii

Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
In every fragment multiplies; and makes
A thousand images of one that was,
The same, and still the more, the more it breaks;
And thus the heart will do which not forsakes,
Living in shattered guise, and still, and cold,
And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow aches,
Yet withers on till all without is old,
Showing no visible sign, for such things are untold.

xxxiv

There is a very life in our despair,
Vitality of poison—a quick root
Which feeds these deadly branches; for it were
As nothing did we die; but life will suit
Itself to Sorrow's most detested fruit,
Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's shore,
All ashes to the taste: Did man compute
Existence by enjoyment, and count o'er
Such hours 'gainst years of life—say, would he name three-
score?

xxxv

The Psalmist numbered out the years of man:
They are enough: and if thy tale be true,
Thou, who didst grudge him even that fleeting span,
More than enough, thou fatal Waterloo!
Millions of tongues record thee, and anew
Their children's lips shall echo them, and say—
“Here, where the sword united nations drew,
Our countrymen were warring on that day!”
And this is much, and all which will not pass away.

xxxvi

There sunk the greatest, nor the worst of men,
Whose spirit antithetically mixed
One moment of the mightiest, and again
On little objects with like firmness fixed,
Extreme in all things! had thou been betwixt,
Thy throne had still been thine, or never been;
For daring made thy rise as fall: thou seek'st
Even now to reassume the imperial mien,
And shake again the world, the Thunderer of the scene!

XXXVII

Conqueror and captive of the earth art thou !
She trembles at thee still, and thy wild name
Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds than now
That thou art nothing, save the jest of Fame,
Who wooed thee once, thy vassal, and became
The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou wert
A god unto thyself ; nor less the same
To the astounded kingdoms all inert,
Who deemed thee for a time whate'er thou didst assert.

XXXVIII

Oh, more or less than man—in high or low,
Battling with nations, flying from the field ;
Now making monarchs' necks thy footstool, now
More than thy meanest soldier taught to yield :
An empire thou couldst crush, command, rebuild,
But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,
However deeply in men's spirits skilled,
Look through thine own, nor curb the lust of war,
Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the loftiest star.

XXXIX

Yet well thy soul hath brooked the turning tide
With that untaught innate philosophy,
Which, be it wisdom, coldness, or deep pride,
Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.
When the whole host of hatred stood hard by,
To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou hast smiled
With a sedate and all-enduring eye—
When Fortune fled her spoiled and favourite child,
He stood unbowed beneath the ills upon him piled.

XL

Sager than in thy fortunes ; for in them
Ambition steeled thee on too far to show
That just habitual scorn, which could condemn
Men and their thoughts ; 'twas wise to feel, not so
To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,
And spurn the instruments thou wert to use
Till they were turned unto thine overthrow ;
'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose ;
So hath it proved to thee, and all such lot who choose.

XLI

If, like a tower upon a headlong rock,
Thou hadst been made to stand or fall alone,
Such scorn of man had helped to brave the shock ;
But men's thoughts were the steps which paved thy throne,

Their admiration thy best weapon shone ;
 The part of Philip's son was thine, not then
 (Unless aside thy purple had been thrown)
 Like stern Diogenes to mock at men ;
 For sceptred cynics earth were far too wide a den.

XLII

But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell,
 And there hath been thy bane ; there is a fire
 And motion of the soul which will not dwell
 In its own narrow being, but aspire
 Beyond the fitting medium of desire ;
 And, but once kindled, quenchless evermore,
 Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire
 Of aught but rest ; a fever at the core,
 Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore.

XLIII

This makes the madmen who have made men mad
 By their contagion ; conquerors and kings,
 Founders of sects and systems, to whom add
 Sophists, bards, statesmen, all inquiet things
 Which stir too strongly the soul's secret springs,
 And are themselves the fools to those they fool ;
 Envied, yet how unenviable ! what stings
 Are theirs ! One breast laid open were a school
 Which would unteach mankind the lust to shine or rule.

XLIV

Their breath is agitation, and their life
 A storm whereon they ride, to sink at last,
 And yet so nursed and bigoted to strife,
 That should their days, surviving perils past,
 Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast
 With sorrow and supineness, and so die ;
 Even as a flame unfed, which runs to waste
 With its own flickering, or a sword laid by,
 Which eats into itself, and rusts ingloriously.

XLV

He who ascends to mountain-tops, shall find
 The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds and snow ;
 He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
 Must look down on the hate of those below.
 Though high above the sun of glory glow,
 And far beneath the earth and ocean spread,
 Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
 Contending tempests on his naked head,
 And thus reward the toils which to those summits led.

XLVI

Away with these! true Wisdom's world will be
Within its own creation, or in thine,
Maternal Nature! for who teems like thee,
Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine?
There Harold gazes on a work divine,
A blending of all beauties; streams and dells,
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, corn-field, mountain, vine,
And chiefless castles breathing stern farewells
From gray but leafy walls, where Ruin greenly dwells.

XLVII

And there they stand, as stands a lofty mind,
Worn, but unstooping to the baser crowd,
All tenantless, save to the cramming wind,
Or holding dark communion with the cloud.
There was a day when they were young and proud,
Banners on high, and battles passed below;
But they who fought are in a bloody shroud,
And those which waved are shredless dust ere now,
And the bleak battlements shall bear no future blow.

XLVIII

Beneath these battlements, within those walls,
Power dwelt amidst her passions; in proud state
Each robber chief upheld his armed halls,
Doing his evil will, nor less elate
Than mightier heroes of a longer date.
What want these outlaws conquerors should have,
But history's purchased page to call them great?
A wider space, an ornamental grave?
Their hopes were not less warm, their souls were full as brave.

XLIX

In their baronial feuds and single fields,
What deeds of prowess unrecorded died!
And Love, which lent a blazon to their shields,
With emblems well devised by amorous pride,
Through all the mail of iron hearts would glide;
But still their flame was fierceness, and drew on
Keen contest and destruction near allied,
And many a tower for some fair mischief won,
Saw the discoloured Rhine beneath its ruin run.

L

But thou, exulting and abounding river!
Making thy waves a blessing as they flow
Through banks whose beauty would endure forever
Could man but leave thy bright creation so,

Nor its fair promise from the surface mow
With the sharp scythe of conflict—then to see
Thy valley of sweet waters, were to know
Earth paved like Heaven; and to seem such to me
Even now what wants thy stream?—that it should Lethe be.

LI

A thousand battles have assailed thy banks,
But these and half their fame have passed away,
And Slaughter heaped on high his weltering ranks:
Their very graves are gone, and what are they?
Thy tide washed down the blood of yesterday,
And all was stainless, and on thy clear stream
Glassed with its dancing light the sunny ray;
But o'er the blackened memory's blighting dream
Thy waves would vainly roll, all sweeping as they seem.

LII

Thus Harold inly said, and passed along,
Yet not insensibly to all which here
Awoke the jocund birds to early song
In glens which might have made e'en exile dear;
Though on his brow were graven lines austere,
And tranquil sternness which had ta'en the place
Of feelings fierier far but less severe,
Joy was not always absent from his face,
But o'er it in such scenes would steal with transient trace.

LIII

Nor was all love shut from him though his days
Of passion had consumed themselves to dust.
It is in vain that we would coldly gaze
On such as smile upon us; the heart must
Leap kindly back to kindness, though disgust
Hath weaned it from all worldlings: thus he felt,
For there was soft remembrance, and sweet trust
In one fond breast, to which his own would melt,
And in its tenderer hour on that his bosom dwelt.

LIV

And he had learned to love—I know not why,
For this in such as him seems strange of mood—
The helpless looks of blooming infancy,
Even in its earliest nurture; what subdued,
To change like this, a mind so far imbued
With scorn of man, it little boots to know;
But thus it was; and though in solitude
Small power the nipped affections have to grow,
In him this glowed when all beside had ceased to glow.

LV

And there was one soft breast, as hath been said,
Which unto his was bound by stronger ties
Than the church links withal: and, though unwed,
That love was pure, and far above disguise,
Had stood the test of mortal enmities
Still undivided, and cemented more
By peril, dreaded most in female eyes;
But this was firm, and from a foreign shore
Well to that heart might his these absent greetings pour!

The castled crag of Drachenfels,
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of waters broadly swells
Between the banks which bear the vine,
And hills all rich with blossomed trees,
And fields which promise corn and wine,
And scattered cities crowning these,
Whose far white walls along them shine,
Have strewed a scene, which I should see
With double joy wert thou with me.

And peasant girls, with deep-blue eyes,
And hands which offer early flowers,
Walk smiling o'er this paradise;
Above, the frequent feudal towers
Through green leaves lift their walls of gray,
And many a rock which steeply lowers,
And noble arch in proud decay,
Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers;
But one thing want these banks of Rhine,—
Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine!

I send the lilies given to me;
Though long before thy hand they touch,
I know that they must withered be,
But yet reject them not as such;
For I have cherished them as dear,
Because they yet may meet thine eye,
And guide thy soul to mine even here,
Where thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
And know'st them gathered by the Rhine,
And offered from my heart to thine!

The river nobly foams and flows,
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round:

The haughtiest breast its wish might bound
 Through life to dwell delighted here;
 Nor could on earth a spot be found
 To Nature and to me so dear,
 Could thy dear eyes in following mine
 Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine!

LVI

By Coblentz, on a rise of gentle ground,
 There is a small and simple pyramid,
 Crowning the summit of the verdant mound;
 Beneath its base are heroes' ashes hid,
 Our enemy's—but let not that forbid
 Honor to Marceau! o'er whose early tomb
 Tears, big tears, gushed from the rough soldier's lid,
 Lamenting and yet envying such a doom,
 Falling for France, whose rights he battled to resume.

LVII

Brief, brave, and glorious was his young career—
 His mourners were two hosts, his friends and foes,
 And fitly may the stranger lingering here
 Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose;
 For he was Freedom's champion, one of those,
 The few in number, who had not o'erstept
 The charter to chastise which she bestows
 On such as wield her weapons; he had kept
 The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him wept.

LVIII

Here Ehrenbreitstein, with her shattered wall
 Black with the miner's blast, upon her height
 Yet shows of what she was, when shell and ball
 Rebounding idly on her strength did light:
 A tower of victory, from whence the flight
 Of baffled foes was watched along the plain:
 But Peace destroyed what War could never blight,
 And laid those proud roofs bare to summer's rain—
 On which the iron shower for years had poured in vain.

LIX

Adieu to thee, fair Rhine! How long delighted
 The stranger fain would linger on his way!
 Thine is a scene alike where souls united
 Or lonely Contemplation thus might stray;
 And could the ceaseless vultures cease to prey

On self-condemning bosoms, it were here,
Where Nature, nor too sombre nor too gay,
Wild but not rude, awful yet not austere,
Is to the mellow earth as autumn to the year.

LX

Adieu to thee again! a vain adieu!
There can be no farewell to scene like thine,
The mind is coloured by thy every hue;
And if reluctantly the eyes resign
Their cherished gaze upon thee, lovely Rhine!
'Tis with the thankful glance of parting praise;
More mighty spots may rise—more glaring shine,
But none unite in one attaching maze
The brilliant, fair, and soft—the glories of old days.

LXI

The negligently grand, the fruitful bloom
Of coming ripeness, the white city's sheen,
The rolling stream, the precipice's gloom,
The forest's growth, and Gothic walls between,
The wild rocks shaped as they had turrets been
In mockery of man's art; and these withal
A race of faces happy as the scene,
Whose fertile bounties here extend to all,
Still springing o'er thy banks, though empires near them fall.

LXII

But these recede. Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned Eternity in icy halls
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanche—the thunderbolt of snow!
All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
Gather around these summits, as to show
How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave vain man below.

LXIII

But ere these matchless heights I dare to scan,
There is a spot should not be passed in vain—
Morat! the proud, the patriot field! where man
May gaze on ghastly trophies of the slain,
Nor blush for those who conquered on that plain;
Here Burgundy bequeathed his tombless host,
A bony heap, through ages to remain,
Themselves their monument; the Stygian coast
Unsepulchred they roamed and shrieked each wandering ghost.

LXIV

While Waterloo with Cannæ's carnage vies,
Morat and Marathon twin names shall stand;
They were true Glory's stainless victories,
Won by the unambitious heart and hand
Of a proud, brotherly, and civic band,
All unbought champions in no princely cause
Of vice-entailed Corruption; they no land
Doomed to bewail the blasphemy of laws
Making kings' rights divine, by some Draconic clause.

LXV

By a lone wall a lonelier column rears
A gray and grief-worn aspect of old days;
'Tis the last remnant of the wreck of years,
And looks as with the wild bewildered gaze
Of one to stone converted by amaze,
Yet still with consciousness; and there it stands
Making a marvel that it not decays,
When the coeval pride of human hands,
Levelled Aventicum, hath strewed her subject lands.

LXVI

And there—oh! sweet and sacred be the name!—
Julia—the daughter, the devoted—gave
Her youth to Heaven; her heart, beneath a claim
Nearest to Heaven's, broke o'er a father's grave.
Justice is sworn 'gainst tears, and hers would crave
The life she lived in; but the judge was just,
And then she died on him she could not save.
Their tomb was simple, and without a bust,
And held within their urn one mind, one heart, one dust.

LXVII

But these are deeds which should not pass away,
And names that must not wither, though the earth
Forgets her empires with a just decay,
The enslavers and the enslaved, their death and birth;
The high, the mountain-majesty of worth,
Should be, and shall, survivor of its woe,
And from its immortality look forth
In the sun's face, like yonder Alpine snow,
Imperishably pure beyond all things below.

LXVIII

Lake Lemman woos me with its crystal face,
The mirror where the stars and mountains view
The stillness of their aspect in each trace
Its clear depth yields of their far height and hue:

There is too much of man here, to look through
With a fit mind the might which I behold ;
But soon in me shall Loneliness renew
Thoughts hid, but not less cherished than of old,
Ere mingling with the herd had penned me in their fold.

LXIX

To fly from, need not be to hate, mankind :
All are not fit with them to stir and toil,
Nor is it discontent to keep the mind
Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil
In one hot throng, where we become the spoil
Of our infection, till too late and long
We may deplore and struggle with the coil,
In wretched interchange of wrong for wrong,
'Midst a contentious world, striving where none are strong.

LXX

There, in a moment, we may plunge our years
In fatal penitence, and in the blight
Of our own soul, turn all our blood to tears,
And colour things to come with hues of night ;
The race of life becomes a hopeless flight
To those that walk in darkness : on the sea,
The boldest steer but where their ports invite,
But there are wanderers o'er Eternity
Whose bark drives on and on, and anchored ne'er shall be.

LXXI

Is it not better, then, to be alone,
And love Earth only for its earthly sake ?
By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,
Or the pure bosom of its nursing lake,
Which feeds it as a mother who doth make
A fair but froward infant her own care,
Kissing its cries away as these awake !—
Is it not better thus our lives to wear,
Than join the crushing crowd, doomed to inflict or bear ?

LXXII

I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me ; and to me
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
Of human cities torture : I can see
Nothing to loathe in nature, save to be
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,
Classed among creatures, when the soul can flee,
And with the sky, the peak, the heaving plain
Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not in vain.

LXXIII

And thus I am absorbed, and this is life :
 I look upon the peopled desert past,
 As on a place of agony and strife,
 Where, for some sin, to sorrow I was cast,
 To act and suffer, but remount at last
 With a fresh pinion ; which I feel to spring,
 Though young, yet waxing vigorous, as the blast
 Which it would cope with, on delighted wing,
 Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round our being cling.

LXXIV

And when, at length, the mind shall be all free
 From what it hates in this degraded form,
 Reft of its carnal life, 'save what shall be
 Existent happier in the fly and worm—
 When elements to elements conform,
 And dust is as it should be, shall I not
 Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm ?
 The bodiless thought ? the spirit of each spot ?
 Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot ?

LXXV

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part
 Of me and of my soul, as I of them ?
 Is not the love of these deep in my heart
 With a pure passion ? should I not condemn
 All objects, if compared with these ? and stem
 A tide of suffering, rather than forego
 Such feelings for the hard and worldly phlegm
 Of those whose eyes are only turned below,
 Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts which dare not glow ?

LXXVI

But this is not my theme ; and I return
 To that which is immediate, and require
 Those who find contemplation in the urn,
 To look on One, whose dust was once all fire,
 A native of the land where I respire
 The clear air for a while—a passing guest,
 Where he became a being—whose desire
 Was to be glorious ; 'twas a foolish quest,
 The which to gain and keep, he sacrificed all rest.

LXXVII

Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau,
 The apostle of affliction, he who threw
 Enchantment over passion, and from woe
 Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew

The breath which made him wretched; yet he knew
How to make madness beautiful, and cast
O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly hue
Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they past
The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feelingly and fast.

LXXVIII

His love was passion's essence—as a tree
On fire by lightning; with ethereal flame
Kindled he was, and blasted; for to be
Thus, and enamoured, were in him the same.
But his was not the love of living dame,
Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,
But of ideal beauty, which became
In him existence, and o'erflowing teems
Along his burning page, distempered though it seems.

LXXIX

This breathed itself to life in Julie, this
Invested her with all that's wild and sweet;
This hallowed, too, the memorable kiss
Which every morn his fevered lip would greet,
From hers, who but with friendship his would meet;
But to that gentle touch, through brain and breast
Flashed the thrilled spirit's love-devouring heat:
In that absorbing sigh perchance more blest
Than vulgar minds may be with all they seek possess.

LXXX

His life was one long war with self-sought foes,
Or friends by him self-banished; for his mind
Had grown Suspicion's sanctuary, and chose
For its own cruel sacrifice the kind,
'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange and blind,
But he was frenzied—wherefore, who may know?
Since cause might be which skill could never find;
But he was frenzied by disease or woe
To that worst pitch of all, which wears a reasoning show.

LXXXI

For then he was inspired, and from him came
As from the Pythian's mystic cave of yore,
Those oracles which set the world in flame,
Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no more:
Did he not this for France? which lay before
Bowed to the inborn tyranny of years?
Broken and trembling to the yoke she bore,
Till by the voice of him and his compeers,
Roused up to too much wrath, which follows o'ergrown fears?

LXXXII

They made themselves a fearful monument!
 The wreck of old opinions—things which grew,
 Breathed from the birth of time: the veil they rent,
 And what behind it lay, all earth shall view.
 But good with ill they also overthrew,
 Leaving but ruins, wherewith to rebuild
 Upon the same foundation, and renew
 Dungeons and thrones, which the same hour refilled,
 As heretofore, because ambition was self-willed.

LXXXIII

But this will not endure, nor be endured!
 Mankind have felt their strength, and made it felt.
 They might have used it better, but, allured
 By their new vigour, sternly have they dealt
 On one another; pity ceased to melt
 With her once natural charities. But they,
 Who in oppression's darkness caved had dwelt,
 They were not eagles, nourished with the day;
 What marvel then, at times, if they mistook their prey!

LXXXIV

What deep wounds ever closed without a scar?
 The heart's bleed longest, and but heal to wear
 That which disfigures it; and they who war
 With their own hopes, and have been vanquished, bear
 Silence, but not submission: in his lair
 Fixed Passion holds his breath, until the hour
 Which shall atone for years; none need despair:
 It came, it cometh, and will come—the power
 To punish or forgive—in one we shall be slower.

LXXXV

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
 With the wild world I dwelt in is a thing
 Which warns me, with its stillness to forsake
 Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
 This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
 To waft me from distraction; once I loved
 Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
 Sounds sweet as if a Sister's voice reproved,
 That I with stern delights should e'er have been so moved.

LXXXVI

It is the hush of night, and all between
 Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
 Mellowed and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
 Save darkened Jura, whose capt heights appear

Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
 There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
 Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
 Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
 Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more;

LXXXVII

He is an evening reveller, who makes
 His life an infancy, and sings his fill;
 At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
 Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
 There seems a floating whisper on the hill;
 But that is fancy, for the starlight dew
 All silently their tears of love instil,
 Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
 Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

LXXXVIII

Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven,
 If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
 Of men and empires—'tis to be forgiven,
 That in our aspirations to be great,
 Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
 And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
 A beauty, and a mystery, and create
 In us such love and reverence from afar,
 That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a star.

LXXXIX

All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep,
 But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
 And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep:—
 All heaven and earth are still: from the high host
 Of stars, to the lulled lake and mountain-coast,
 All is concentered in a life intense,
 Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
 But hath a part of being, and a sense
 Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

XC

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
 In solitude, where we are least alone;
 A truth, which through our being then doth melt,
 And purifies from self: it is a tone,
 The soul and source of music, which makes known
 Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm,
 Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,
 Binding all things with beauty; 'twould disarm
 The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm.

XCI

Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places and the peak
Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus take
A fit and unvalled temple, there to seek
The Spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak,
Upreared of human hands. Come, and compare
Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy prayer!

XCII

The sky is changed!—and such a change! O night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

XCIII

And this is in the night:—Most glorious night!
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight—
A portion of the tempest and of thee!
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
And now again 'tis black—and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

XCIV

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between
Heights which appear as lovers who have parted
In hate, whose mining depths so intervene,
That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted;
Though in their souls, which thus each other thwarted,
Love was the very root of the fond rage
Which blighted their life's bloom, and then departed:—
Itself expired, but leaving them an age
Of years all winters—war within themselves to wage.

XCV

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his way,
The mightiest of the storms hath taken his stand:
For here, not one, but many, make their play,
And fling their thunder-bolts from hand to hand,

Flashing and cast around : of all the band,
The brightest through these parted hills hath forked
His lightnings—as if he did understand
That in such gaps as desolation worked,
There the hot shaft should blast whatever therein lurked.

XCVI

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings! ye!
With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul
To make these felt and feeling, well may be
Things that have made me watchful; the far roll
Of your departing voices, is the knoll
Of what in me is sleepless:—if I rest.
But where of ye, O tempests! is the goal?
Are ye like those within the human breast?
Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some high nest?

XCVII

Could I embody and unbosom now
That which is most within me—could I wreak
My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak,
All that I would have sought, and all I seek,
Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe—into one word,
And that one word were Lightning, I would speak;
But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword.

XCVIII

The morn is up again, the dewy morn,
With breath all incense, and with cheek all bloom,
Laughing the clouds away with playful scorn,
And living as if earth contained no tomb—
And glowing into day: we may resume
The march of our existence: and thus I,
Still on thy shores, fair Leman! may find room
And food for meditation, nor pass by
Much that may give us pause, if pondered fittingly.

XCIX

Clarens! sweet Clarens! birthplace of deep love!
Thine air is the young breath of passionate thought;
Thy trees take root in love; the snows above
The very glaciers have his colours caught,
And sunset into rose-hues sees them wrought
By rays which sleep there lovingly: the rocks,
The permanent crags, tell here of Love, who sought
In them a refuge from the worldly shocks,
Which stir and sting the soul with hope that woos, then mocks.

C

Clarens! by heavenly feet thy paths are trod—
Undying Love's who here ascends a throne
To which the steps are mountains; where the god
Is a pervading life and light—so shown
Not on those summits solely, nor alone
In the still cave and forest; o'er the flower
His eye is sparkling, and his breath hath blown,
His soft and summer breath, whose tender power
Passes the strength of storms in their most desolate hour.

CI

All things are here of him; from the black pines,
Which are his shade on high, and the loud roar
Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the vines
Which slope his green path downward to the shore,
Where the bowed waters meet him, and adore,
Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the wood,
The covert of old trees, with trunks all hoar,
But light leaves, young as joy, stands where it stood,
Offering to him, and his, a populous solitude.

CII

A populous solitude of bees and birds,
And fairy-formed and many-coloured things,
Who worship him with notes more sweet than words,
And innocently open their glad wings
Fearless and full of life: the gush of springs,
And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend
Of stirring branches, and the bud which brings
The swiftest thought of beauty, here extend,
Mingling, and made by Love, unto one mighty end.

CIII

He who hath loved not, here would learn that lore,
And make his heart a spirit; he who knows
That tender mystery, will love the more,
For this is Love's recess, where vain men's woes,
And the world's waste, have driven him far from those,
For 'tis his nature to advance or die:
He stands not still, but or decays, or grows
Into a boundless blessing, which may vie
With the immortal lights, in its eternity!

CIV

'Twas not for fiction chose Rousseau this spot,
Peopling it with affections; but he found
It was the scene which passion must allot
To the mind's purified beings; 'twas the ground

Where early Love his Psyche's zone unbound,
And hallowed it with loveliness: 'tis lone,
And wonderful, and deep, and hath a sound,
And sense, and sight of sweetness; here the Rhone
Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps have reared a throne.

CV

Lausanne! and Ferney! ye have been the abodes
Of names which unto you bequeathed a name;
Mortals, who sought and found, by dangerous roads,
A path to perpetuity of fame:
They were gigantic minds, and their steep aim
Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile
Thoughts which should call down thunder, and the flame
Of Heaven, again assailed, if Heaven the while
On man and man's research could deign do more than smile.

CVI

The one was fire and fickleness, a child,
Most mutable in wishes, but in mind
A wit as various—gay—grave—sage—or wild—
Historian, bard, philosopher, combined;
He multiplied himself among mankind,
The Proteus of their talents: but his own
Breathed most in ridicule—which, as the wind,
Blew where it listed, laying all things prone—
Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to shake a throne.

CVII

The other, deep and slow, exhausting thought,
And hiving wisdom with each studious year,
In meditation dwelt, with learning wrought,
And shaped his weapon with an edge severe,
Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer;
The lord of irony—that master-spell,
Which stung his foes to wrath, which grew from fear,
And doomed him to the zealot's ready hell,
Which answers to all doubts so eloquently well.

CVIII

Yet, peace be with their ashes—for by them,
If merited, the penalty is paid;
It is not ours to judge—far less condemn;
The hour must come when such things shall be made
Known unto all—or hope and dread allayed
By slumber, on one pillow—in the dust,
Which, thus much we are sure, must lie decayed;
And, when it shall revive, as is our trust,
'Twill be to be forgiven, or suffer what is just.

CIX

But let me quit man's works, again to read
 His Maker's, spread around me, and suspend
 This page, which from my reveries I feed,
 Until it seems prolonging without end.
 The clouds above me to the white Alps tend,
 And I must pierce them, and survey whate'er
 May be permitted, as my steps I bend
 To their most great and growing region, where
 The earth to her embrace compels the powers of air.

CX

Italia! too, Italia! looking on thee
 Full flashes on the soul the light of ages,
 Since the fierce Carthaginian almost won thee,
 To the last halo of the chiefs and sages,
 Who glorify thy consecrated pages;
 Thou wert the throne and grave of empires; still,
 The fount at which the panting mind assuages
 Her thirst for knowledge, quaffing there her fill,
 Flows from the eternal source of Rome's imperial hill.

CXI

Thus far have I proceeded in a theme
 Renewed with no kind auspices:—to feel
 We are not what we have been, and to deem
 We are not what we should be—and to steel
 The heart against itself; and to conceal,
 With a proud caution, love, or hate, or aught—
 Passion or feeling, purpose, grief, or zeal—
 Which is the tyrant spirit of our thought,
 Is a stern task of soul:—No matter—it is taught.

CXII

And for these words, thus woven into song,
 It may be that they are a harmless wile—
 The colouring of the scenes which fleet along,
 Which I would seize, in passing, to beguile
 My breast, or that of others, for a while.
 Fame is the thirst of youth—but I am not
 So young as to regard men's frown or smile,
 As loss or guerdon of a glorious lot;
 I stood and stand alone—remembered or forgot.

CXIII

I have not loved the world, nor the world me;
 I have not flattered its rank breath, nor bowed
 To its idolatries a patient knee—
 Nor coined my cheek to smiles—nor cried aloud

In worship of an echo ; in the crowd
They could not deem me one of such ; I stood
Among them, but not of them ; in a shroud
Of thoughts which were not their thoughts, and still could,
Had I not filed my mind, which thus itself subdued.

CXIV

I have not loved the world, nor the world me—
But let us part fair foes ; I do believe,
Though I have found them not, that there may be
Words which are things—hopes which will not deceive,
And virtues which are merciful, nor weave
Snares for the falling : I would also deem
O'er others' griefs that some sincerely grieve ;
That two, or one, are almost what they seem—
That goodness is no name, and happiness no dream.

CXV

My daughter ! with thy name this song begun—
My daughter ! with thy name thus much shall end—
I see thee not—I hear thee not—but none
Can be so wrapt in thee ; thou art the friend
To whom the shadows of far years extend :
Albeit my brow thou never shouldst behold,
My voice shall with thy future visions blend,
And reach into thy heart—when mine is cold—
A token and a tone, even from thy father's mould.

CXVI

To aid thy mind's development—to watch
Thy dawn of little joys—to sit and see
Almost thy very growth—to view thee catch
Knowledge of objects—wonders yet to thee !
To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee,
And print on thy soft cheek a parent's kiss—
This, it should seem, was not reserved for me ;
Yet this was in my nature :—as it is,
I know not what is there, yet something like to this.

CXVII

Yet, though dull hate as duty should be taught,
I know that thou wilt love me ; though my name
Should be shut from thee, as a spell still fraught
With desolation—and a broken claim :
Though the grave closed between us—'twere the same,
I know that thou wilt love me ; though to drain
My blood from out thy being were an aim,
And an attainment—all would be in vain—
Still thou wouldst love me, still that more than life retain.

CXVIII

The child of love—though born in bitterness,
 And nurtured in convulsion. Of thy sire
 These were the elements—and thine no less.
 As yet such are around thee—but thy fire
 Shall be more tempered, and thy hope far higher.
 Sweet be thy cradled slumbers! O'er the sea,
 And from the mountains where I now respire,
 Fain would I waft such blessing upon thee,
 As, with a sigh, I deem thou mightst have been to me!

CANTO THE FOURTH

TO JOHN HOBHOUSE, ESQ., A. M., F. R. S., ETC.

MY DEAR HOBHOUSE: After an interval of eight years between the composition of the first and last cantos of *Childe Harold*, the conclusion of the poem is about to be submitted to the public. In parting with so old a friend, it is not extraordinary that I should recur to one still older and better; to one who has beheld the birth and death of the other, and to whom I am far more indebted for the social advantages of an enlightened friendship, than—though not ungrateful—I can, or could be, to *Childe Harold*, for any public favour reflected through the poem on the poet; to one, whom I have known long, and accompanied far, whom I have found wakeful over my sickness and kind in my sorrow, glad in my prosperity and firm in my adversity, true in counsel and trusty in peril; to a friend often tried and never found wanting—to yourself.

In so doing, I recur from fiction to truth; and in dedicating to you, in its complete or at least concluded state, a poetical work which is the longest, the most thoughtful and comprehensive of my compositions, I wish to do honour to myself by the record of many years' intimacy with a man of learning, of talent, of steadiness, and of honour. It is not for minds like ours to give or to receive flattery; yet the praises of sincerity have ever been permitted to the voice of friendship; and it is not for you, nor even for others, but to relieve a heart which has not elsewhere, or lately, been so much accustomed to the encounter of good-will as to withstand the shock firmly, that I thus attempt to commemorate your good qualities, or rather the advantages which I have derived from their exertion. Even the recurrence of the date of this letter, the anniversary of the most unfortunate day of my past existence, but which can not poison my future while I retain the source of your friendship, and of my own faculties, will henceforth have a more agreeable recollection for both, inasmuch as it will remind us of this my attempt to thank you for an indefatigable regard, such as few men have experienced, and no one could experience without thinking better of his species and of himself.

It has been our fortune to traverse together, at various periods, the countries of chivalry, history, and fable—Spain, Greece, Asia Minor, and Italy; and what Athens and Constantinople were to us a few years ago, Venice and Rome have been more recently. The poem also, or the pilgrim, or both, have accompanied me from first to last; and perhaps it may

be a pardonable vanity which induces me to reflect with complacency on a composition which in some degree connects me with the spot where it was produced, and the objects it would fain describe; and however unworthy it may be deemed of those magical and memorable abodes, however short it may fall of our distant conceptions and immediate impressions, yet as a mark of respect for what is venerable, and of feeling for what is glorious, it has been to me a source of pleasure in the production, and I part with it with a kind of regret, which I hardly suspected that events could have left me for imaginary objects.

With regard to the conduct of the last canto, there will be found less of the pilgrim than in any of the preceding, and that little slightly, if at all, separated from the author speaking in his own person. The fact is, that I had become weary of drawing a line which every one seemed determined not to receive: like the Chinese in Goldsmith's "Citizen of the World," whom nobody would believe to be a Chinese, it was in vain that I asserted, and imagined that I had drawn, a distinction between the author and the pilgrim; and the very anxiety to preserve this difference, and disappointment at finding it unavailing, so far crushed my efforts in the composition, that I determined to abandon it altogether—and have done so. The opinions which have been, or may be, formed on that subject, are now a matter of indifference; the work is to depend on itself, and not on the writer; and the author, who has no resources in his own mind beyond the reputation, transient or permanent, which is to arise from his literary efforts, deserves the fate of authors.

In the course of the following canto it was my intention, either in the text or in the notes, to have touched upon the present state of Italian literature, and perhaps of manners. But the text, within the limits I proposed, I soon found hardly sufficient for the labyrinth of external objects, and the consequent reflections; and for the whole of the notes, excepting a few of the shortest, I am indebted to yourself, and these were necessarily limited to the elucidation of the text.

It is also a delicate, and no very grateful, task to dissert upon the literature and manners of a nation so dissimilar; and requires an attention and impartiality which would induce us—though perhaps no inattentive observers, nor ignorant of the language or customs of the people among whom we have recently abode—to distrust, or at least defer our judgment, and more narrowly examine our information. The state of literary, as well as political, party appears to run, or to have run, so high, that for a stranger to steer impartially between them is next to impossible. It may be enough, then, at least for my purpose, to quote from their own beautiful language—"Mi pare che in un paese tutto poetico, che vanta la lingua la più nobile ed insieme la più dolce tutte le vie diverse si possono tentare, e che sinche la patria di Alfieri e di Monti non ha perduto l'antico valore, in tutte essa dovrebbe essere la prima." Italy has great names still—Canova, Monti, Ugo Foscolo, Pindemonti, Visconti, Morelli, Cicognara, Albrizzi, Mezzophanti, Mai, Mustoxidi, Aglietti, and Vacca, will secure to the present generation an honourable place in most of the departments of art, science, and belles lettres; and in some the very highest: Europe—the world—has but one Canova.

It has been somewhere said by Alfieri, that "La pianta uomo nasce più robusta in Italia che in qualunque altra terra—e che gli stessi atroci delitti che vi si commettono ne sono una prova." Without subscribing to the latter part of his proposition—a dangerous doctrine, the truth of which may be disputed on better grounds, namely, that the Italians are in no respect more ferocious than their neighbours—that man must be wilfully blind, or ignorantly heedless, who is not struck with the extraor-

dinary capacity of this people, or, if such a word be admissible, their capabilities, the facility of their acquisitions, the rapidity of their conceptions, the fire of their genius, their sense of beauty, and, amid all the disadvantages of repeated revolutions, the desolation of battles, and the despair of ages, their still unquenched "longing after immortality"—the immortality of independence. And when we ourselves, in riding round the walls of Rome, heard the simple lament of the labourers' chorus, "Roma! Roma! Roma! Roma non è più come era prima," it was difficult not to contrast this melancholy dirge with the bacchanal roar of the songs of exultation still yelled from the London taverns, over the carnage of Mont St. Jean, and the betrayal of Genoa, of Italy, of France, and of the world, by men whose conduct you yourself have exposed in a work worthy of the better days of our history. For me—

"Non movero mai corda
Ove la turba di sue ciance assorda."

What Italy has gained by the late transfer of nations, it were useless for Englishmen to inquire, till it becomes ascertained that England has acquired something more than a permanent army and a suspended habeas corpus; it is enough for them to look at home. For what they have done abroad, and especially in the south, "Verily they will have their reward," and at no very distant period.

Wishing you, my dear Hobhouse, a safe and agreeable return to that country whose real welfare can be dearer to none than to yourself, I dedicate to you this poem in its completed state; and repeat once more how truly I am ever, your obliged and affectionate friend,

BYRON.

VENICE, January 2, 1818.

CANTO THE FOURTH

I

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs;
A palace and a prison on each hand:
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand:
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles
O'er the far times when many a subject land
Looked to the winged Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles!

II

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers:

And such she was;—her daughters had their dowers
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East
Poured in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.
In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deemed their dignity increased.

III

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
And silent rows the songless gondolier :
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
And music meets not always now the ear :
Those days are gone—but beauty still is here.
States fall, arts fade—but Nature doth not die,
Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,
The pleasant place of all festivity,
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy !

IV

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
Her name in story, and her long array
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond
Above the dogeless city's vanished sway ;
Ours is a trophy which will not decay
With the Rialto ; Shylock and the Moor,
And Pierre, can not be swept or worn away—
The keystones of the arch ! though all were o'er,
For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

V

The beings of the mind are not of clay ;
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray
And more beloved existence : that which Fate
Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied,
First exiles, then replaces what we hate ;
Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void.

VI

Such is the refuge of our youth and age,
The first from hope, the last from vacancy ;
And this worn feeling peoples many a page,
And, may be, that which grows beneath mine eye ;
Yet there are things whose strong reality
Outshines our fairy-land ; in shape and hues
More beautiful than our fantastic sky,
And the strange constellations which the Muse
O'er her wild universe is skilful to diffuse :

VII

I saw or dreamed of such—but let them go—
They came like truth, and disappeared like dreams;
And whatsoe'er they were—are now but so;
I could replace them if I would: still teems
My mind with many a form which aptly seems
Such as I sought for, and at moments found;
Let these too go—for waking Reason deems
Such overweening phantasies unsound,
And other voices speak, and other sights surround.

VIII

I've taught me other tongues—and in strange eyes
Have made me not a stranger; to the mind
Which is itself, no changes bring surprise;
Nor is it harsh to make, nor hard to find
A country with—ay, or without mankind;
Yet was I born where men are proud to be,
Not without cause; and should I leave behind
The inviolate island of the sage and free,
And seek me out a home by a remoter sea,

IX

Perhaps I loved it well: and should I lay
My ashes in a soil which is not mine,
My spirit shall resume it—if we may
Unbodied choose a sanctuary. I twine
My hopes of being remembered in my line
With my land's language: if too fond and far
These aspirations in their scope incline—
If my fame should be, as my fortunes are,
Of hasty growth and blight, and dull Oblivion bar

X

My name from out the temple where the dead
Are honoured by the nations—let it be—
And light the laurels on a loftier head!
And be the Spartan's epitaph on me—
“Sparta hath many a worthier son than he.”
Meantime I seek no sympathies, nor need;
The thorns which I have reaped are of the tree
I planted—they have torn me—and I bleed:
I should have known what fruit would spring from such a seed.

XI

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord;
And, annual marriage now no more renewed,
The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,
Neglected garment of her widowhood!

St. Mark yet sees his lion where he stood
Stand, but in mockery of his withered power,
Over the proud Place where an Emperor sued,
And monarchs gazed and envied in the hour
When Venice was a queen with an unequalled dower.

XII

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns—
An Emperor tramples where an Emperor knelt;
Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains
Clank over sceptred cities; nations melt
From Power's high pinnacle, when they have felt
The sunshine for a while, and downward go
Like lauwine loosened from the mountain's belt;
Oh for one hour of blind old Dandolo!
Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering foe.

XIII

Before St. Mark still glow his steeds of brass,
Their gilded collars glittering in the sun;
But is not Doria's menace come to pass?
Are they not bridled!—Venice, lost and won,
Her thirteen hundred years of freedom done,
Sinks, like a sea-weed, into whence she rose!
Better be whelmed beneath the waves, and shun,
Even in Destruction's depth, her foreign foes,
From whom submission wrings an infamous repose.

XIV

In youth she was all glory—a new Tyre—
Her very byword sprung from victory,
The "Planter of the Lion," which through fire
And blood she bore o'er subject earth and sea;
Though making many slaves, herself still free,
And Europe's bulwark 'gainst the Ottomite;
Witness Troy's rival, Candia! Vouch it, ye
Immortal waves that saw Lepanto's fight!
For ye are names no time nor tyranny can blight.

XV

Statues of glass—all shivered—the long file
Of her dead Doges are declined to dust;
But where they dwelt, the vast and sumptuous pile
Bespeaks the pageant of their splendid trust;
Their sceptre broken, and their sword in rust,
Have yielded to the stranger: empty halls,
Thin streets, and foreign aspects, such as must
Too oft remind her who and what enthrals,
Have flung a desolate cloud o'er Venice' lovely walls.

XVI

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,
And fettered thousands bore the yoke of war,
Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse,
Her voice their only ransom from afar:
See! as they chant the tragic hymn, the car
Of the o'ermastered victor stops, the reins
Fall from his hands—his idle scimitar
Starts from its belt—he rends his captive's chains,
And bids him thank the bard for freedom and his strains.

XVII

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were thine,
Were all thy proud heroic deeds forgot,
Thy choral memory of the bard divine,
Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the knot
Which ties thee to thy tyrants; and thy lot
Is shameful to the nations—most of all,
Albion! to thee: the Ocean Queen should not
Abandon Ocean's children; in the fall
Of Venice think of thine, despite thy watery wall.

XVIII

I loved her from my boyhood—she to me
Was as a fairy city of the heart,
Rising like water-columns from the sea,
Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart;
And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakespeare's art,
Had stamped her image in me, and even so,
Although I found her thus, we did not part,
Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,
Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and a show.

XIX

I can repeople with the past—and of
The present there is still for eye and thought,
And meditation chastened down, enough;
And more, it may be, than I hoped or sought;
And of the happiest moments which were wrought
Within the web of my existence, some
From thee, fair Venice! have their colours caught:
There are some feelings Time can not benumb,
Nor Torture shake, or mine would now be cold and dumb.

XX

But from their nature will the tannen grow
Loftiest on loftiest and least sheltered rocks,
Rooted in barrenness, where naught below
Of soil supports them 'gainst the Alpine shocks

Of eddying storms; yet springs the trunk, and mocks
The howling tempest, till its height and frame
Are worthy of the mountains from whose blocks
Of bleak, gray granite, into life it came,
And grew a giant tree;—the mind may grow the same.

XXI

Existence may be borne, and the deep root
Of life and sufferance make its firm abode
In bare and desolated bosoms: mute
The camel labours with the heaviest load,
And the wolf dies in silence—not bestowed
In vain should such example be; if they,
Things of ignoble or of savage mood,
Endure and shrink not, we of nobler clay
May temper it to bear—it is but for a day.

XXII

All suffering doth destroy, or is destroyed,
Even by the sufferer; and, in each event,
Ends:—Some, with hope replenished and rebuoyed,
Return to whence they came—with like intent,
And weave their web again; some, bowed and bent
Wax gray and ghastly, withering ere their time,
And perish with the reed on which they leant;
Some seek devotion, toil, war, good or crime,
According as their souls were formed to sink or climb.

XXIII

But ever and anon of griefs subdued
There comes a token like a scorpion's sting,
Scarce seen, but with fresh bitterness imbued;
And slight withal may be the things which bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside forever: it may be a sound—
A tone of music—summer's eve—or spring—
A flower—the wind—the ocean—which shall wound,
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound;

XXIV

And how and why we know not, nor can trace
Home to its cloud this lightning of the mind,
But feel the shock renewed, nor can efface
The blight and blackening which it leaves behind,
Which out of things familiar, undesigned,
When least we deem of such, calls up to view
The spectres whom no exorcism can bind,
The cold—the changed—perchance the dead—anew,
The mourned, the loved, the lost—too many!—yet how few!

XXV

But my soul wanders; I demand it back
To meditate amongst decay, and stand
A ruin amidst ruins; there to track
Fallen states and buried greatness, o'er a land
Which was the mightiest in its old command,
And is the loveliest, and must ever be
The master-mould of Nature's heavenly hand,
Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,
The beautiful, the brave—the lords of earth and sea,

XXVI

The commonwealth of kings, the men of Rome!
And even since, and now, fair Italy!
Thou art the garden of the world, the home
Of all Art yields, and Nature can decree;
Even in thy desert, what is like to thee?
Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste
More rich than other climes' fertility;
Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graced
With an immaculate charm which can not be defaced.

XXVII

The moon is up, and yet it is not night—
Sunset divides the sky with her—a sea
Of glory streams along the Alpine height
Of blue Friuli's mountains; heaven is free
From clouds, but of all colours seems to be
Melted to one vast Iris of the West,
Where the day joins the past eternity;
While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest
Floats through the azure air—an island of the blest!

XXVIII

A single star is at her side, and reigns
With her o'er half the lonely heaven; but still
Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains
Rolled o'er the peak of the far Rhætian hill,
As day and night contending were, until
Nature reclaimed her order:—gently flows
The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues instil
The odorous purple of a new-born rose,
Which streams upon her stream, and glassed within it glows.

XXIX

Filled with the face of heaven, which, from afar,
Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,
From the rich sunset to the rising star,
Their magical variety diffuse:

And now they change; a paler shadow strews
 Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day
 Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
 With a new colour as it gasps away,
 The last still loveliest, till—'tis gone—and all is gray.

xxx

There is a tomb in Arqua;—reared in air,
 Pillared in their sarcophagus, repose
 The bones of Laura's lover: here repair
 Many familiar with his well-sung woes,
 The pilgrims of his genius. He arose
 To raise a language, and his land reclaim
 From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes:
 Watering the tree which bears his lady's name
 With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame.

xxxI

They keep his dust in Arqua, where he died;
 The mountain-village where his latter days
 Went down the vale of years; and 'tis their pride—
 An honest pride—and let it be their praise,
 To offer to the passing stranger's gaze
 His mansion and his sepulchre; both plain
 And venerably simple, such as raise
 A feeling more accordant with his strain
 Than if a pyramid formed his monumental fame.

xxxII

And the soft quiet hamlet where he dwelt
 Is one of that complexion which seems made
 For those who their mortality have felt,
 And sought a refuge from their hopes decayed
 In the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade,
 Which shows a distant prospect far away
 Of busy cities, now in vain displayed,
 For they can lure no further; and the ray
 Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday,

xxxIII

Developing the mountains, leaves, and flowers,
 And shining in the brawling brook, where-by,
 Clear as its current, glide the sauntering hours
 With a calm languor, which, though to the eye
 Idlesse it seem, hath its morality.
 If from society we learn to live,
 'Tis solitude should teach us how to die;
 It hath no flatterers; vanity can give
 No hollow aid; alone—man with his God must strive:

XXXIV

Or, it may be, with demons, who impair
The strength of better thoughts, and seek their prey
In melancholy bosoms, such as were
Of moody texture from their earliest day,
And loved to dwell in darkness and dismay,
Deeming themselves predestined to a doom
Which is not of the pangs that pass away;
Making the sun like blood, the earth a tomb,
The tomb a hell, and hell itself a murkier gloom.

XXXV

Ferrara! in thy wide and grass-grown streets,
Whose symmetry was not for solitude,
There seems as 'twere a curse upon the seats
Of former sovereigns, and the antique brood
Of Este, which for many an age made good
Its strength within thy walls, and was of yore
Patron or tyrant, as the changing mood
Of petty power impelled, of those who wore
The wreath which Dante's brow alone had worn before.

XXXVI

And Tasso is their glory and their shame.
Hark to his strain! and then survey his cell!
And see how dearly earned Torquato's fame,
And where Alfonso bade his poet dwell.
The miserable despot could not quell
The insulted mind he sought to quench, and blend
With the surrounding maniacs, in the hell
Where he had plunged it. Glory without end
Scattered the clouds away—and on that name attend

XXXVII

The tears and praises of all time, while thine
Would rot in its oblivion—in the sink
Of worthless dust, which from thy boasted line
Is shaken into nothing; but the link
Thou formest in his fortunes bids us think
Of thy poor malice, naming thee with scorn—
Alfonso! how thy ducal pageants shrink
From thee! if in another station born,
Scarce fit to be the slave of him thou mad'st to mourn.

XXXVIII

Thou! formed to eat, and be despised, and die,
Even as the beasts that perish, save that thou
Hadst a more splendid trough and wider sty:
He! with a glory round his furrowed brow,

Which emanated then, and dazzles now
In face of all his foes, the Cruscan quire,
And Boileau, whose rash envy could allow
No strain which shamed his country's creaking lyre,
That whetstone of the teeth—monotony in wire!

XXXIX

Peace to Torquato's injured shade! 'twas his
In life and death to be the mark where Wrong
Aimed with her poisoned arrows; but to miss.
Oh, victor unsurpassed in modern song!
Each year brings forth its millions; but how long
The tide of generations shall roll on,
And not the whole combined and countless throng
Compose a mind like thine! though all in one
Condensed their scattered rays, they would not form a sun.

XL

Great as thou art, yet paralleled by those,
Thy countrymen, before thee born to shine,
The Bards of Hell and Chivalry: first rose
The Tuscan father's comedy divine;
Then, not unequal to the Florentine,
The southern Scott, the minstrel who called forth
A new creation with his magic line,
And, like the Ariosto of the North,
Sang ladye-love and war, romance and knightly worth.

XLI

The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust
The iron crown of laurel's mimicked leaves;
Nor was the ominous element unjust,
For the true laurel-wreath which Glory weaves
Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves,
And the false semblance but disgraced his brow;
Yet still, if fondly Superstition grieves,
Know, that the lightning sanctifies below
Whate'er it strikes;—yon head is doubly sacred now!

XLII

Italia! O Italia! thou who hast
The fatal gift of beauty, which became
A funeral dower of present woes and past,
On thy sweet brow is sorrow ploughed by shame,
And annals graved in characters of flame.
O God! that thou wert in thy nakedness
Less lovely or more powerful, and couldst claim
Thy right, and awe the robbers back, who press
To shed thy blood, and drink the tears of thy distress;

XLIII

Then might'st thou more appal; or, less desired,
 Be homely and be peaceful, undeplord
 For thy destructive charms; then, still untired,
 Would not be seen the armed torrents poured
 Down the deep Alps; nor would the hostile horde
 Of many-nationed spoilers from the Po
 Quaff blood and water; nor the stranger's sword
 Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,
 Victor or vanquished, thou the slave of friend or foe.

XLIV

Wandering in youth, I traced the path of him,
 The Roman friend of Rome's least mortal mind,
 The friend of Tully: as my bark did skim
 The bright blue waters with a fanning wind,
 Came Megara before me, and behind
 Ægina lay, Piræus on the right,
 And Corinth on the left; I lay reclined
 Along the prow, and saw all these unite
 In ruin, even as he had seen the desolate sight;

XLV

For time hath not rebuilt them, but upreared
 Barbaric dwellings on their shattered site,
 Which only make more mourned and more endeared
 The few last rays of their far-scattered light,
 And the crushed relics of their vanished might.
 The Roman saw these tombs in his own age,
 These sepulchres of cities, which excite
 Sad wonder, and his yet surviving page
 The moral lesson bears, drawn from such pilgrimage.

XLVI

That page is now before me, and on mine
 His country's ruin added to the mass
 Of perished states he mourned in their decline,
 And I in desolation: all that was
 Of then destruction is; and now, alas!
 Rome—Rome imperial, bows her to the storm,
 In the same dust and blackness, and we pass
 The skeleton of her Titanic form,
 Wrecks of another world, whose ashes still are warm.

XLVII

Yet, Italy! through every other land
 Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from side to side;
 Mother of Arts! as once of Arms; thy hand
 Was then our guardian, and is still our guide;

Parent of our religion! whom the wide
 Nations have knelt to for the keys of heaven!
 Europe, repentant of her parricide,
 Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward driven,
 Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be forgiven.

XLVIII

But Arno wins us to the fair white walls,
 Where the Etrurian Athens claims and keeps
 A softer feeling for her fairy halls.
 Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps
 Her corn, and wine, and oil, and Plenty leaps
 To laughing life, with her redundant horn.
 Along the banks where smiling Arno sweeps
 Was modern luxury of Commerce born,
 And buried Learning rose, redeemed to a new morn.

XLIX

There, too, the Goddess loves in stone, and fills
 The air around with beauty; we inhale
 The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, instils
 Part of its immortality; the veil
 Of heaven is half undrawn; within the pale
 We stand, and in that form and face behold
 What Mind can make, when Nature's self would fail;
 And to the fond idolators of old
 Envy the innate flash which such a soul could mould:

L

We gaze and turn away, and know not where,
 Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart
 Reels with its fulness; there—forever there—
 Chained to the chariot of triumphal Art,
 We stand as captives, and would not depart.
 Away!—there need no words, nor terms precise,
 The paltry jargon of the marble mart,
 Where Pedantry gulls Folly—we have eyes:
 Blood—pulse—and breast, confirm the Dardan shepherd's
 prize.

LI

Appear'dst thou not to Paris in this guise?
 Or to more deeply blest Anchises? or,
 In all thy perfect goddess-ship, when lies
 Before thee thy own vanquished Lord of War?
 And gazing in thy face as toward a star,
 Laid on thy lap, his eyes to thee upturn,
 Feeding on thy sweet cheek! while thy lips are
 With lava kisses melting while they burn,
 Showered on his eyelids, brow, and mouth, as from an urn!

LII

Glowing, and circumfused in speechless love,
 Their full divinity inadequate
 That feeling to express, or to improve,
 The gods become as mortals, and man's fate
 Has moments like their brightest; but the weight
 Of earth recoils upon us;—let it go!
 We can recall such visions, and create,
 From what has been, or might be, things which grow
 Into thy statue's form, and look like gods below.

LIII

I leave to learned fingers, and wise hands,
 The artist and his ape, to teach and tell
 How well his connoisseurship understands
 The graceful bend, and the voluptuous swell:
 Let these describe the undescribable:
 I would not their vile breath should crisp the stream
 Wherein that image shall forever dwell;
 The unruffled mirror of the loveliest dream
 That ever left the sky on the deep soul to beam.

LIV

In Santa Croce's holy precincts lie
 Ashes which make it holier, dust which is
 Even in itself an immortality,
 Though there were nothing save the past, and this
 The particle of those sublimities
 Which have relapsed to chaos:—here repose
 Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his,
 The starry Galileo, with his woes;
 Here Machiavelli's earth returned to whence it rose.

LV

These are four minds, which, like the elements,
 Might furnish forth creation:—Italy!
 Time, which hath wronged thee with ten thousand rents
 Of thine imperial garment, shall deny,
 And hath denied, to every other sky,
 Spirits which soar from ruin:—thy decay
 Is still impregnate with divinity,
 Which gilds it with revivifying ray;
 Such as the great of yore, Canova is to-day.

LVI

But where repose the all Etruscan three—
 Dante, and Petrarch, and, scarce less than they,
 The Bard of Prose, creative spirit! he
 Of the Hundred Tales of love—where did they lay

Their homes, distinguished from our common clay
 In death as life? Are they resolved to dust,
 And have their country's marbles naught to say?
 Could not her quarries furnish forth one bust?
 Did they not to her breast their filial earth intrust?

LVII

Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar,
 Like Scipio, buried by the upbraiding shore;
 Thy factions, in their worse than civil war,
 Proscribed the bard whose name for evermore
 Their children's children would in vain adore
 With the remorse of ages; and the crown
 Which Petrarch's laureate brow supremely wore,
 Upon a far and foreign soil had grown,
 His life, his fame, his grave, though rifled—not thine own.

LVIII

Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeathed
 His dust—and lies it not her great among,
 With many a sweet and solemn requiem breathed
 O'er him who formed the Tuscan's siren tongue?
 That music in itself, whose sounds are song,
 The poetry of speech? No;—even his tomb
 Uptorn, must bear the hyena bigot's wrong,
 No more amidst the meaner dead find room,
 Nor claim a passing sigh, because it told for whom!

LIX

And Santa Croce wants their mighty dust;
 Yet for this want more noted, as of yore
 The Cæsar's pageant, shorn of Brutus' bust,
 Did but of Rome's best son remind her more:
 Happier Ravenna! on thy hoary shore,
 Fortress of falling empire! honoured sleeps
 The immortal exile;—Arqua, too, her store
 Of tuneful relics proudly claims and keeps,
 While Florence vainly begs her banished dead, and weeps.

LX

What is her pyramid of precious stones?
 Of porphyry, jasper, agate, and all hues
 Of gem and marble, to encrust the bones
 Of merchant-dukes? the momentary dues
 Which, sparkling to the twilight stars, infuse
 Freshness in the green turf that wraps the dead,
 Whose names are mausoleums of the Muse,
 Are gently prest with far more reverent tread
 Than ever paced the slab which paves the princely head.

LXI

There be more things to greet the heart and eyes
In Arno's dome of Art's most princely shrine,
Where Sculpture with her rainbow sister vies;
There be more marvels yet—but not for mine:
For I have been accustomed to entwine
My thoughts with Nature rather in the fields,
Than Art in galleries: though a work divine
Calls for my spirit's homage, yet it yields
Less than it feels, because the weapon which it wields

LXII

Is of another temper, and I roam
By Thrasimene's lake, in the defiles
Fatal to Roman rashness, more at home;
For there the Carthaginian's warlike wiles
Come back before me, as his skill beguiles
The host between the mountains and the shore,
Where Courage falls in her despairing files,
And torrents, swollen to rivers with their gore,
Reek through the sultry plain, with legions scattered o'er.

LXIII

Like to a forest felled by mountain winds;
And such the storm of battle on this day,
And such the frenzy, whose convulsion blinds
To all save carnage, that, beneath the fray,
An earthquake reeled unheededly away!
None felt stern Nature rocking at his feet,
And yawning forth a grave for those who lay
Upon their bucklers for a winding sheet;
Such is the absorbing hate when warring nations meet!

LXIV

The earth to them was as a rolling bark
Which bore them to eternity; they saw
The ocean round, but had no time to mark
The motions of their vessel; Nature's law,
In them suspended, recked not of the awe
Which reigns when mountains tremble, and the birds
Plunge in the clouds for refuge, and withdraw
From their down-toppling nests; and bellowing herds
Stumble o'er heaving plains, and man's dread hath no words.

LXV

Far other scene is Thrasimene now;
Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain
Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough;
Her agèd trees rise thick as once the slain

Lay where their roots are ; but a brook hath ta'en—
A little rill of scanty stream and bed—
A name of blood from that day's sanguine rain ;
And Sanguinetto tells ye where the dead
Made the earth wet, and turned the unwilling waters red.

LXVI

But thou, Clitumnus ! in thy sweetest wave
Of the most living crystal that was e'er
The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave
Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost rear
Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-white steer
Grazes ; the purest god of gentle waters !
And most serene of aspect, and most clear ;
Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaughters,
A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest daughters !

LXVII

And on thy happy shore a temple still,
Of small and delicate proportions, keeps,
Upon a mild declivity of hill,
Its memory of thee ; beneath it sweeps
Thy current's calmness ; oft from out it leaps
The finny darter with the glittering scales,
Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps ;
While, chance, some scattered water-lily sails
Down where the shallower wave still tells its bubbling tales,

LXVIII

Pass not unblest the genius of the place !
If through the air a zephyr more serene
Win to the brow, 'tis his ; and if ye trace
Along his margin a more eloquent green,
If on the heart the freshness of the scene
Sprinkle its coolness, and from the dry dust
Of weary life a moment lave it clean
With Nature's baptism—'tis to him ye must
Pay orisons for this suspension of disgust.

LXIX

The roar of waters !—from the headlong height
Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice ;
The fall of waters ! rapid as the light
The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss ;
The hell of waters ! where they howl and hiss,
And boil in endless torture ; while the sweat
Of their great agony, wrung out from this
Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks of jet
That gird the gulf around, in pitiless horror set,

LXX

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again
Returns in an unceasing shower, which round,
With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,
Is an eternal April to the ground,
Making it all one emerald:—how profound
The gulf! and how the giant element
From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,
Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and rent,
With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent

LXXI

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows
More like the fountain of an infant sea
Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes
Of a new world, than only thus to be
Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,
With many windings through the vale:—Look back!
Lo! where it comes like an eternity,
As if to sweep down all things in its track,
Charming the eye with dread—a matchless cataract,

LXXII

Horribly beautiful! but on the verge,
From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,
An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,
Like Hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn
Its steady dyes, when all around is torn
By the distracted waters, bears serene
Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn:
Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,
Love watching Madness with unalterable mien.

LXXIII

Once more upon the woody Apennine,
The infant Alps, which—had I not before
Gazed on their mightier parents, where the pine
Sits on more shaggy summits, and where roar
The thundering lawine—might be worshipped more;
But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear
Her never-trodden snow, and seen the hoar
Glaciers of bleak Mont Blanc both far and near,
And in Chimari heard the thunder-hills of fear,

LXXIV

The Acroceraunian mountains of old name;
And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly
Like spirits of the spot, as 'twere for fame,
For still they soared unutterably high:

I've looked on Ida with a Trojan's eye;
Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas, made
These hills seem things of lesser dignity,
All, save the lone Soracte's height displayed,
Not now in snow, which asks the lyric Roman's aid

LXXV

For our remembrance, and from out the plain
Heaves like a long-swept wave about to break,
And on the curl hangs pausing: not in vain
May he, who will, his recollections rake,
And quote in classic raptures, and awake
The hills with Latian echoes; I abhorred
Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,
The drilled dull lesson, forced down word by word
In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to record

LXXVI

Aught that recalls the daily drug which turned
My sickening memory; and, though Time hath taught
My mind to meditate what then it learned,
Yet such the fixed inveteracy wrought
By the impatience of my early thought,
That with the freshness wearing out before
My mind could relish what it might have sought,
If free to choose, I can not now restore
Its health; but what it then detested, still abhor.

LXXVII

Then farewell, Horace; whom I hated so,
Not for thy faults, but mine; it is a curse
To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,
To comprehend, but never love thy verse,
Although no deeper moralist rehearse
Our little life, nor bard prescribe his art,
Nor livelier satirist the conscience pierce,
Awakening without wounding the touched heart,
Yet fare thee well—upon Soracte's ridge we part.

LXXVIII

O Rome! my country! city of the soul!
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
Lone mother of dead empires! and control
In their shut breasts their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, ye!
Whose agonies are evils of a day—
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

LXXIX

The Niobe of nations! there she stands,
 Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;
 An empty urn within her withered hands,
 Whose holy dust was scattered long ago;
 The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now;
 The very sepulchres lie tenantless
 Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,
 Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?
 Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress.

LXXX

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood, and Fire,
 Have dealt upon the seven-hilled city's pride;
 She saw her glories star by star expire,
 And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,
 Where the car climbed the Capitol; far and wide
 Temple and tower went down, nor left a site:—
 Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,
 O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,
 And say, "Here was, or is," where all is doubly night?

LXXXI

The double night of ages, and of her,
 Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapped, and wrap
 All round us; we but feel our way to err;
 The ocean hath its chart, the stars their map,
 And Knowledge spreads them on her ample lap;
 But Rome is as the desert, where we steer
 Stumbling o'er recollections; now we clap
 Our hands, and cry, "Eureka!" it is clear—
 When but some false mirage of ruin rises near.

LXXXII

Alas! the lofty city! and alas!
 The trebly hundred triumphs! and the day
 When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass
 The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away.
 Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,
 And Livy's pictured page!—but these shall be
 Her resurrection; all beside—decay.
 Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see
 That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was free!

LXXXIII

O thou, whose chariot rolled on Fortune's wheel,
 Triumphant Sylla! Thou, who didst subdue
 Thy country's foes ere thou wouldst pause to feel
 The wrath of thy own wrongs, or reap the due

Of hoarded vengeance till thine eagles flew
O'er prostrate Asia;—thou, who with thy frown
Annihilated senates—Roman, too,
With all thy vices, for thou didst lay down
With an atoning smile a more than earthly crown—

LXXXIV

The dictatorial wreath—couldst thou divine
To what would one day dwindle that which made
Thee more than mortal? and that so supine
By aught than Romans Rome should thus be laid?
She who was named eternal, and arrayed
Her warriors but to conquer—she who veiled
Earth with her haughty shadow, and displayed,
Until the o'er-canopied horizon failed,
Her rushing wings—Oh! she who was almighty hailed!

LXXXV

Sylla was first of victors; but our own
The sagest of usurpers, Cromwell; he
Too swept off senates while he hewed the throne
Down to a block—immortal rebel! See
What crimes it costs to be a moment free
And famous through all ages! but beneath
His fate the moral lurks of destiny;
His day of double victory and death
Beheld him win two realms, and, happier, yield his breath.

LXXXVI

The third of the same moon whose former course
Had all but crowned him, on the selfsame day
Deposed him gently from his throne of force,
And laid him with the earth's preceding clay.
And showed not Fortune thus how fame and sway,
And all we deem delightful, and consume
Our souls to compass through each arduous way,
Are in her eyes less happy than the tomb?
Were they but so in man's, how different were his doom!

LXXXVII

And thou, dread statue! yet existent in
The austerest form of naked majesty,
Thou who beheldest, 'mid the assassins' din,
At thy bathed base the bloody Cæsar lie,
Folding his robe in dying dignity,
An offering to thine altar from the queen
Of gods and men, great Nemesis? did he die,
And thou, too, perish, Pompey? have ye been
Victors of countless kings, or puppets of a scene?

LXXXVIII

And thou, the thunder-stricken nurse of Rome!
 She-wolf! whose brazen-imaged dugs impart
 The milk of conquest yet within the dome
 Where, as a monument of antique art,
 Thou standest:—Mother of the mighty heart,
 Which the great founder sucked from thy wild teat,
 Scorched by the Roman Jove's ethereal dart,
 And thy limbs blacked with lightning—dost thou yet
 Guard thine immortal cubs, nor thy fond charge forget?

LXXXIX

Thou dost;—but all thy foster-babes are dead—
 The men of iron; and the world hath reared
 Cities from out their sepulchres: men bled
 In imitation of the things they feared,
 And fought and conquered, and the same course steered,
 At apish distance; but as yet none have,
 Nor could, the same supremacy have neared,
 Save one vain man, who is not in the grave,
 But, vanquished by himself, to his own slaves a slave,

XC

The fool of false dominion—and a kind
 Of bastard Cæsar, following him of old
 With steps unequal; for the Roman's mind
 Was modelled in a less terrestrial mould,
 With passions fiercer, yet a judgment cold,
 And an immortal instinct which redeemed
 The frailties of a heart so soft, yet bold.
 Alcides with the distaff now he seemed
 At Cleopatra's feet—and now himself he beamed,

XCI

And came, and saw, and conquered! But the man
 Who would have tamed his eagles down to flee,
 Like a trained falcon, in the Gallic van,
 Which he, in sooth, long led to victory,
 With a deaf heart which never seemed to be
 A listener to itself, was strangely framed;
 With but one weakest weakness—vanity:
 Coquettish in ambition, still he aimed—
 At what? Can he avouch—or answer what he claimed?

XCII

And would be all or nothing—nor could wait
 For the sure grave to level him; few years
 Had fixed him with the Cæsars in his fate,
 On whom we tread: For this the conqueror rears

The arch of triumph ! and for this the tears
And blood of earth flow on as they have flowed,
A universal deluge, which appears
Without an ark for wretched man's abode,
And ebbs but to reflow !—Renew thy rainbow, God !

XCIII

What from this barren being do we reap ?
Our senses narrow, and our reason frail,
Life short, and truth a gem which loves the deep,
And all things weighed in custom's falsest scale ;
Opinion an omnipotence—whose veil
Mantles the earth with darkness, until right
And wrong are accidents, and men grow pale
Lest their own judgments should become too bright,
And their free thoughts be crimes, and earth have too much
light.

XCIV

And thus they plod in sluggish misery,
Rotting from sire to son, and age to age,
Proud of their trampled nature, and so die,
Bequeathing their hereditary rage
To the new race of inborn slaves, who wage
War for their chains, and rather than be free,
Bleed gladiator-like, and still engage
Within the same arena where they see
Their fellows fall before, like leaves of the same tree.

XCV

I speak not of men's creeds—they rest between
Man and his Maker—but of things allowed,
Averred, and known—and daily, hourly seen—
The yoke that is upon us doubly bowed,
And the intent of tyranny avowed,
The edict of earth's rulers, who are grown
The apes of him who humbled once the proud,
And shook them from their slumbers on the throne ;
Too glorious, were this all his mighty arm had done.

XCVI

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquered be,
And Freedom find no champion and no child
Such as Columbia saw arise when she
Sprung forth a Pallas, armed and undefiled ?
Or must such minds be nourished in the wild,
Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the roar
Of cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled
On infant Washington ? Has earth no more
Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no such shore ?

XCVII

But France got drunk with blood to vomit crime,
 And fatal have her Saturnalia been
 To Freedom's cause, in every age and clime;
 Because the deadly days which we have seen,
 And vile Ambition, that built up between
 Man and his hopes an adamantine wall,
 And the base pageant last upon the scene,
 Are grown the pretext for the eternal thrall
 Which nips life's tree, and dooms man's worst—his second
 fall.

XCVIII

Yet, Freedom! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,
 Streams like the thunder-storm against the wind;
 Thy trumpet-voice, though broken now and dying,
 'The loudest still the tempest leaves behind;
 Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,
 Chopped by the axe, looks rough and little worth,
 But the sap lasts—and still the seed we find
 Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North;
 So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth.

XCIX

There is a stern round tower of other days,
 Firm as a fortress, with its fence of stone,
 Such as an army's baffled strength delays,
 Standing with half its battlements alone,
 And with two thousand years of ivy grown,
 The garland of eternity, where wave
 The green leaves over all by time o'erthrown;—
 What was this tower of strength? within its cave
 What treasure lay so locked, so hid?—A woman's grave.

C

But who was she, the lady of the dead,
 Tombed in a palace? Was she chaste and fair?
 Worthy a king's—or more—a Roman's bed?
 What race of chiefs and heroes did she bear?
 What daughter of her beauties was the heir?
 How lived—how loved—how died she? Was she not
 So honoured—and conspicuously there,
 Where meaner relics must not dare to rot,
 Placed to commemorate a more than mortal lot?

C1

Was she as those who love their lords, or they
 Who love the lords of others? such have been
 Even in the olden time, Rome's annals say.
 Was she a matron of Cornelia's mien,

Or the light air of Egypt's graceful queen,
Profuse of joy—or 'gainst it did she war,
Inveterate in virtue? Did she lean
To the soft side of the heart, or wisely bar
Love from amongst her griefs?—for such the affections are.

CII

Perchance she died in youth: it may be, bowed
With woes far heavier than the ponderous tomb
That weighed upon her gentle dust, a cloud
Might gather o'er her beauty, and a gloom
In her dark eye, prophetic of the doom
Heaven gives its favourites—early death; yet shed
A sunset charm around her, and illumine
With hectic light the Hesperus of the dead,
Of her consuming cheek the autumnal leaf-like red.

CIII

Perchance she died in age—surviving all,
Charms, kindred, children—with the silver gray
On her long tresses, which might yet recall,
It may be, still a something of the day
When they were braided, and her proud array
And lovely form were envied, praised, and eyed
By Rome.—But, whither would Conjecture stray?
Thus much alone we know—Metella died,
The wealthiest Roman's wife: behold his love or pride!

CIV

I know not why—but standing thus by thee
It seems as if I had thine inmate known,
Thou tomb! and other days come back on me
With recollected music, though the tone
Is changed and solemn, like the cloudy groan
Of dying thunder on the distant wind;
Yet could I seat me by this ivied stone
Till I had bodied forth the heated mind
Forms from the floating wreck which Ruin leaves behind;

CV

And from the planks, far shattered o'er the rocks,
Built me a little bark of hope, once more
To battle with the ocean and the shocks
Of the loud breakers, and the ceaseless roar
Which rushes on the solitary shore
Where all lies foundered that was ever dear:
But could I gather from the wave-worn store
Enough for my rude boat, where should I steer?
There woos no home, nor hope, nor life, save what is here.

CVI

Then let the winds howl on ! their harmony
 Shall henceforth be my music, and the night
 The sound shall temper with the owlets' cry,
 As I now hear them, in the fading light
 Dim o'er the bird of darkness' native site,
 Answering each other on the Palatine,
 With their large eyes, all glistening gray and bright,
 And sailing pinions.—Upon such a shrine
 What are our petty griefs ?—let me not number mine.

CVII

Cypress and ivy, weed and wallflower grown
 Matted and massed together, hillocks heaped
 On what were chambers, arch crushed, column strown
 In fragments, choked-up vaults, and frescos steeped
 In subterranean damps, where the owl peeped,
 Deeming it midnight :—temples, baths or halls ?
 Pronounce who can ; for all that learning reaped
 From her research hath been, that these are walls—
 Behold the Imperial Mount ! 'tis thus the mighty falls.

CVIII

There is the moral of all human tales ;
 'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past,
 First freedom, and then glory—when that fails,
 Wealth, vice, corruption—barbarism at last.
 And history, with all her volumes vast,
 Hath but one page—'tis better written here,
 Where gorgeous tyranny hath thus amassed
 All treasures, all delights, that eye or ear,
 Heart, soul could seek, tongue ask.—Away with words : draw
 near,

CIX

Admire, exult—despise—laugh, weep—for here
 There is such matter for all feeling :—man !
 Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear,
 Ages and realms are crowded in this span,
 This mountain, whose obliterated plan
 The pyramid of empires pinnacled,
 Of glory's gewgaws shining in the van
 Till the sun's rays with added flame were filled !
 Where are its golden roofs ? where those who dared to build ?

CX

Tully was not so eloquent as thou,
 Thou nameless column with the buried base !
 What are the laurels of the Cæsar's brow ?
 Crown me with ivy from his dwelling-place.

Whose arch or pillar meets me in the face,
Titus or Trajan's? No—'tis that of Time:
Triumph, arch, pillar, all he doth displace,
Scoffing; and apostolic statues climb
To crush the imperial urn, whose ashes slept sublime,

CXI

Buried in air, the deep blue sky of Rome,
And looking to the stars: they had contained
A spirit which with these would find a home,
The last of those who o'er the whole earth reigned,
The Roman globe, for after none sustained,
But yielded back his conquests:—he was more
Than a mere Alexander, and unstained
With household blood and wine, serenely wore
His sovereign virtues—still we Trajan's name adore.

CXII

Where is the Rock of Triumph, the high place
Where Rome embraced her heroes? where the steep
Tarpeian? fittest goal of Treason's race,
The promontory whence the Traitor's Leap
Cured all ambition. Did the conquerors heap
Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon field below,
A thousand years of silenced factions sleep—
The Forum, where the immortal accents glow,
And still the eloquent air breathes—burns with Cicero!

CXIII

The field of freedom, faction, fame, and blood:
Here a proud people's passions were exhaled,
From the first hour of empire in the bud
To that when further worlds to conquer failed;
But long before had Freedom's face been veiled,
And Anarchy assumed her attributes;
Till every lawless soldier who assailed
Trode on the trembling Senate's slavish mutes,
Or raised the venal voice of baser prostitutes.

CXIV

Then turn we to our latest tribune's name,
From her ten thousand tyrants turn to thee,
Redeemer of dark centuries of shame—
The friend of Petrarch—hope of Italy—
Rienzi! last of Romans! While the tree
Of freedom's withered trunk puts forth a leaf,
Even for thy tomb a garland let it be—
The Forum's champion, and the people's chief—
Her new-born Numa thou—with reign, alas! too brief.

CXV

Egeria! sweet creation of some heart
Which found no mortal resting-place so fair
As thine ideal breast; whate'er thou art
Or wert—a young Aurora of the air,
The nympholepsy of some fond despair;
Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth,
Who found a more than common votary there
Too much adoring; whatsoe'er thy birth,
Thou wert a beautiful thought, and softly bodied forth.

CXVI

The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled
With thine Elysian water-drops; the face
Of thy cave-guarded spring, with years unwrinkled,
Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,
Whose green wild margin now no more erase
Art's works; nor must the delicate waters sleep,
Prisoned in marble, bubbling from the base
Of the cleft statue, with a gentle leap
The rill runs o'er, and round, fern, flowers, and ivy creep,

CXVII

Fantastically tangled: the green hills
Are clothed with early blossoms, through the grass
The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills
Of summer-birds sing welcome as ye pass;
Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their class,
Implore the pausing step, and with their dyes
Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass;
The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes,
Kissed by the breath of heaven, seems coloured by its skies.

CXVIII

Here didst thou dwell, in this enchanted cover,
Egeria! thy all heavenly bosom beating
For the far footsteps of thy mortal lover;
The purple Midnight veiled that mystic meeting
With her most starry canopy, and seating
Thyself by thine adorer, what befell?
This cave was only shaped out for the greeting
Of an enamoured goddess, and the cell
Haunted by holy Love—the earliest oracle!

CXIX

And didst thou not, thy breast to his replying,
Blend a celestial with a human heart;
And Love, which dies as it was born, in sighing,
Share with immortal transport? could thine art

Make them indeed immortal, and impart
The purity of heaven to earthly joys,
Expel the venom and not blunt the dart—
The dull satiety which all destroys—
And root from out the soul the deadly weed which cloy?

CXX

Alas! our young affections run to waste,
Or water but the desert; whence arise
But weeds of dark luxuriance, tares of haste,
Rank at the core, though tempting to the eyes,
Flowers whose wild odours breathe but agonies,
And trees whose gums are poison; such the plants
Which spring beneath her steps as Passion flies
O'er the world's wilderness, and vainly pants
For some celestial fruit forbidden to our wants.

CXXI

O Love! no habitant of earth thou art—
An unseen seraph, we believe in thee,
A faith whose martyrs are the broken heart,
But never yet hath seen, nor e'er shall see
The naked eye, thy form, as it should be;
The mind hath made thee, as it peopled heaven,
Even with its own desiring phantasy,
And to a thought such shape and image given,
As haunts the unquenched soul—parched—wearied—wrung
—and riven.

CXXII

Of its own beauty is the mind diseased,
And fevers into false creation:—where,
Where are the forms the sculptor's soul hath seized?
In him alone. Can Nature show so fair?
Where are the charms and virtues which we dare
Conceive in boyhood and pursue as men,
The unreach'd Paradise of our despair,
Which o'er-informs the pencil and the pen,
And overpowers the page where it would bloom again?

CXXIII

Who loves, raves—'tis youth's frenzy—but the cure
Is bitterer still; as charm by charm unwinds
Which robed our idols, and we see too sure
Nor worth nor beauty dwells from out the mind's
Ideal shape of such; yet still it binds
The fatal spell, and still it draws us on,
Reaping the whirlwind from the oft-sown winds;
The stubborn heart, its alchemy begun,
Seems ever near the prize—wealthiest when most undone.

CXXIV

We wither from our youth, we gasp away—
 Sick—sick; unfound the boon—unslaked the thirst;
 Though to the last, in verge of our decay,
 Some phantom lures, such as we sought at first—
 But all too late—so are we doubly curst.
 Love, fame, ambition, avarice—'tis the same,
 Each idle—and all ill—and none the worst—
 For all are meteors with a different name,
 And death the sable smoke where vanishes the flame.

CXXV

Few—none—find what they love or could have loved:
 Though accident, blind contact, and the strong
 Necessity of loving, have removed
 Antipathies—but to recur, ere long,
 Envenomed with irrevocable wrong;
 And Circumstance, that unspiritual god
 And miscreator, makes and helps along
 Our coming evils with a crutch-like rod,
 Whose touch turns hope to dust—the dust we all have trod.

CXXVI

Our life is a false nature—'tis not in
 The harmony of things—this hard decree,
 This uneradicable taint of sin,
 This boundless upas, this all-blasting tree,
 Whose root is earth, whose leaves and branches be
 The skies which rain their plagues on men like dew—
 Disease, death, bondage, all the woes we see—
 And worse, the woes we see not—which throb through
 The immedicable soul, with heart-aches ever new.

CXXVII

Yet let us ponder boldly—'tis a base
 Abandonment of reason to resign
 Our right of thought—our last and only place
 Of refuge; this, at least, shall still be mine;
 Though from our birth the faculty divine
 Is chained and tortured—cabined, cribbed, confined,
 And bred in darkness, lest the truth should shine
 Too brightly on the unprepared mind,
 The beam pours in, for time and skill will couch the blind.

CXXVIII

✓
 Arches on arches! as it were that Rome,
 Collecting the chief trophies of her line,
 Would build up all her triumphs in one dome,
 Her Coliseum stands; the moonbeams shine

As 'twere its natural torches, for divine
Should be the light which streams here, to illumine
This long-explored but still exhaustless mine
Of contemplation; and the azure gloom
Of an Italian night, where the deep skies assume

CXXIX

Hues which have words, and speak to ye of heaven,
Floats o'er this vast and wondrous monument,
And shadows forth its glory. There is given
Unto the things of earth, which Time hath bent,
A spirit's feeling, and where he hath leant
His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power
And magic in the ruined battlement,
For which the palace of the present hour
Must yield its pomp, and wait till ages are its dower.

CXXX

O Time! the beautifier of the dead,
Adorner of the ruin, comforter
And only healer when the heart hath bled—
Time! the corrector where our judgments err,
The test of truth, love—sole philosopher,
For all beside are sophists, from thy thrift,
Which never loses though it doth defer—
Time, the avenger! unto thee I lift
My hands, and eyes, and heart, and crave of thee a gift:

CXXXI

Amidst this wreck, where thou hast made a shrine
And temple more divinely desolate,
Among thy mightier offerings here are mine,
Ruins of years—though few, yet full of fate:—
If thou hast ever seen me too elate,
Hear me not; but if calmly I have borne
Good, and reserved my pride against the hate
Which shall not overwhelm me, let me not have worn
This iron in my soul in vain—shall they not mourn?

CXXXII

And thou, who never yet of human wrong
Left the unbalanced scale, great Nemesis!
Here, where the ancient paid the homage long—
Thou, who didst call the Furies from the abyss,
And round Orestes bade them howl and hiss
For that unnatural retribution—just,
Had it but been from hands less near—in this
Thy former realm, I call thee from the dust!
Dost thou not hear my heart?—Awake! thou shalt, and must.

CXXXIII

It is not that I may not have incurred
 For my ancestral faults or mine the wound
 I bleed withal, and had it been conferred
 With a just weapon, it had flowed unbound;
 But now my blood shall not sink in the ground;
 To thee I do devote it—thou shalt take
 The vengeance, which shall yet be sought and found,
 Which if I have not taken for the sake——
 But let that pass—I sleep, but thou shalt yet awake.

CXXXIV

And if my voice break forth, 'tis not that now
 I shrink from what is suffered: let him speak
 Who hath beheld decline upon my brow,
 Or seen my mind's convulsion leave it weak;
 But in this page a record will I seek.
 Not in the air shall these my words disperse,
 Though I be ashes, a far hour shall wreak
 The deep prophetic fulness of this verse,
 And pile on human heads the mountain of my curse!

CXXXV

That curse shall be Forgiveness.—Have I not—
 Hear me, my mother Earth! behold it, Heaven!—
 Have I not had to wrestle with my lot?
 Have I not suffered things to be forgiven?
 Have I not had my brain seared, my heart riven,
 Hopes sapped, name blighted, Life's life lied away?
 And only not to desperation driven,
 Because not altogether of such clay
 As rots into the souls of those whom I survey.

CXXXVI

From mighty wrongs to petty perfidy
 Have I not seen what human things could do?
 From the loud roar of foaming calumny
 To the small whisper of the as paltry few,
 And subtler venom of the reptile crew,
 The Janus glance of whose significant eye,
 Learning to lie with silence, would seem true,
 And without utterance, save the shrug or sigh,
 Deal round to happy fools its speechless obloquy.

CXXXVII

But I have lived, and have not lived in vain:
 My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,
 And my frame perish even in conquering pain,
 But there is that within me which shall tire

Torture and Time, and breathe when I expire;
 Something unearthly, which they deem not of,
 Like the remembered tone of a mute lyre,
 Shall on their softened spirits sink, and move
 In hearts all rocky now the late remorse of love.

CXXXVIII

The seal is set.—Now welcome, thou dread power!
 Nameless, yet thus omnipotent, which here
 Walk'st in the shadow of the midnight hour
 With a deep awe, yet all distinct from fear:
 Thy haunts are ever where the dead walls rear
 Their ivy mantles, and the solemn scene
 Derives from thee a sense so deep and clear
 That we become a part of what has been,
 And grow unto the spot, all-seeing but unseen.

CXXXIX

And there the buzz of eager nations ran,
 In murmured pity, or loud-roared applause,
 As man was slaughtered by his fellow-man.
 And wherefore slaughtered? wherefore, but because
 Such was the bloody Circus' genial laws,
 And the imperial pleasure.—Wherefore not?
 What matters where we fall to fill the maws
 Of worms—on battle-plains or listed spot?
 Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

CXL

I see before me the Gladiator lie:
 He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
 Consents to death, but conquers agony,
 And his drooped head sinks gradually low—
 And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
 From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
 Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now
 The arena swims around him—he is gone,
 Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hailed the wretch who
 won.

CXLI

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
 Were with his heart, and that was far away;
 He recked not of the life he lost nor prize,
 But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
 There were his young barbarians all at play,
 There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
 Butchered to make a Roman holiday—
 All this rushed with his blood.—Shall he expire,
 And unavenged?—Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire!

CXLII

But here, where murder breathed her bloody steam;
 And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,
 And roared or murmured like a mountain-stream
 Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;
 Here where the Roman million's blame or praise
 Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,
 My voice sounds much—and fall the stars' faint rays
 On the arena void—seats crushed—walls bowed—
 And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely loud.

CXLIII

A ruin—yet what ruin! from its mass
 Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been reared;
 Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,
 And marvel where the spoil could have appeared.
 Hath it indeed been plundered, or but cleared?
 Alas! developed, opens the decay,
 When the colossal fabric's form is neared;
 It will not bear the brightness of the day,
 Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft away.

CXLIV

But when the rising moon begins to climb
 Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;
 When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
 And the low night-breeze waves along the air
 The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,
 Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head;
 When the light shines serene but doth not glare,
 Then in this magic circle raise the dead:
 Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their dust ye tread.

CXLV

“While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;
 When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;
 And when Rome falls—the World.” From our own land
 Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall
 In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
 Ancient; and these three mortal things are still
 On their foundations, and unaltered all;
 Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's skill,
 The World—the same wide den—of thieves, or what ye will.

CXLVI

Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime—
 Shrine of all saints and temple of all gods,
 From Jove to Jesus—spared and blest by time;
 Looking tranquility, while falls or nods

Arch, empire, each thing round thee, and man plods
His way through thorns to ashes—glorious dome!
Shalt thou not last?—Time's scythe and tyrants' rods
Shiver upon thee—sanctuary and home
Of art and piety—Pantheon!—pride of Rome!

CXLVII

Relic of nobler days, and noblest arts!
Despoiled yet perfect, with thy circle spreads
A holiness appealing to all hearts—
To art a model; and to him who treads
Rome for the sake of ages, Glory sheds
Her light through thy sole aperture; to those
Who worship, here are altars for their beads;
And they who feel for genius may repose
Their eyes on honoured forms, whose busts around them
close.

CXLVIII

There is a dungeon, in whose dim drear light
What do I gaze on? Nothing: Look again!
Two forms are slowly shadowed on my sight—
Two insulated phantoms of the brain:
It is not so; I see them full and plain—
An old man, and a female young and fair,
Fresh as a nursing mother, in whose vein
The blood is nectar;—but what doth she there,
With her unmantled neck, and bosom white and bare?

CXLIX

Full swells the deep pure fountain of young life,
Where on the heart and from the heart we took
Our first and sweetest nurture, when the wife,
Blest into mother, in the innocent look,
Or even the piping cry of lips that brook
No pain and small suspense, a joy perceives
Man knows not, when from out its cradled nook
She sees her little bud put forth its leaves—
What may the fruit be yet?—I know not—Cain was Eve's.

CL

But here youth offers to old age the food,
The milk of his own gift:—it is her sire
To whom she renders back the debt of blood
Born with her birth. No; he shall not expire
While in those warm and lovely veins the fire
Of health and holy feeling can provide
Great Nature's Nile, whose deep stream rises higher

Than Egypt's river :—from that gentle side
 Drink, drink and live, old man ! heaven's realm holds no such
 tide.

CLI

The starry fable of the milky way
 Has not thy story's purity ; it is
 A constellation of a sweeter ray,
 And sacred Nature triumphs more in this
 Reverse of her decree, than in the abyss
 Where sparkle distant worlds :—O holiest nurse !
 No drop of that clear stream its way shall miss
 To thy sire's heart, replenishing its source
 With life, as our freed souls rejoin the universe.

CLII

Turn to the mole which Hadrian reared on high,
 Imperial mimic of old Egypt's piles,
 Colossal copyist of deformity,
 Whose travelled phantasy from the far Nile's
 Enormous model, doomed the artist's toils
 To build for giants, and for his vain earth,
 His shrunken ashes, raise this dome : How smiles
 The gazer's eye with philosophic mirth,
 To view the huge design which sprung from such a birth !

CLIII

But lo ! the dome—the vast and wondrous dome,
 To which Diana's marvel was a cell—
 Christ's mighty shrine above his martyr's tomb !
 I have beheld the Ephesian's miracle—
 Its columns strew the wilderness, and dwell
 The hyena and the jackal in their shade ;
 I have beheld Sophia's bright roofs swell
 Their glittering mass in the sun, and have surveyed
 Its sanctuary the while the usurping Moslem prayed ;

CLIV

But thou, of temples old, or altars new,
 Standest alone—with nothing like to thee—
 Worthiest of God, the holy and the true.
 Since Zion's desolation, when that He
 Forsook His former city, what could be,
 Of earthly structures, in His honour piled,
 Of a sublimer aspect ? Majesty,
 Power, glory, strength, and beauty, all are aisled
 In this eternal ark of worship undefiled.

CLV

Enter: its grandeur overwhelms thee not;
And why? it is not lessened; but thy mind,
Expanded by the genius of the spot,
Has grown colossal, and can only find
A fit abode wherein appear enshrined
Thy hopes of immortality; and thou
Shalt one day, if found worthy, so defined,
See thy God face to face, as thou dost now
His Holy of Holies, nor be blasted by His brow.

CLVI

Thou movest—but increasing with the advance,
Like climbing some great Alp, which still doth rise,
Deceived by its gigantic elegance;
Vastness which grows—but grows to harmonize—
All musical in its immensities;
Rich marbles—richer painting—shrines where flame
The lamps of gold—and haughty dome which vies
In air with Earth's chief structures, though their frame
Sits on the firm-set ground—and this the clouds must claim.

CLVII

Thou seest not all; but piecemeal thou must break,
To separate contemplation, the great whole;
And as the ocean many bays will make,
That ask the eye—so here condense thy soul
To more immediate objects, and control
Thy thoughts until thy mind hath got by heart
Its eloquent proportions, and unroll
In mighty graduations, part by part,
The glory which at once upon thee did not dart,

CLVIII

Not by its fault—but thine: Our outward sense
Is but of gradual grasp—and as it is
That what we have of feeling most intense
Outstrips our faint expression; even so this
Outshining and o'erwhelming edifice
Fools our fond gaze, and greatest of the great
Defies at first our Nature's littleness,
Till, growing with its growth, we thus dilate
Our spirits to the size of that they contemplate.

CLIX

Then pause, and be enlightened; there is more
In such a survey than the sating gaze
Of wonder pleased, or awe which would adore
The worship of the place, or the mere praise

Of art and its great masters, who could raise
 What former time, nor skill, nor thought could plan;
 The fountain of sublimity displays
 Its depth, and thence may draw the mind of man
 Its golden sands, and learn what great conceptions can.

CLX

Or, turning to the Vatican, go see
 Laocoön's torture dignifying pain—
 A father's love and mortal's agony
 With an immortal's patience blending:—vain
 The struggle; vain, against the coiling strain
 And gripe, and deepening of the dragon's grasp,
 The old man's clinch; the long envenomed chain
 Rivets the living links—the enormous asp
 Enforces pang on pang, and stifles gasp on gasp.

CLXI

Or view the Lord of the unerring bow,
 The God of life, and poesy, and light—
 The sun in human limbs arrayed, and brow
 All radiant from his triumph in the fight;
 The shaft hath just been shot—the arrow bright
 With an immortal's vengeance; in his eye
 And nostril beautiful disdain, and might,
 And majesty, flash their full lightnings by,
 Developing in that one glance the Deity.

CLXII

But in his delicate form—a dream of love,
 Shaped by some solitary nymph, whose breast
 Longed for a deathless lover from above,
 And maddened in that vision—are expressed
 All that ideal beauty ever blessed
 The mind with in its most unearthly mood,
 When each conception was a heavenly guest—
 A ray of immortality—and stood,
 Starlike, around, until they gathered to a god!

CLXIII

And if it be Prometheus stole from heaven
 The fire which we endure, it was repaid
 By him to whom the energy was given
 Which this poetic marble hath arrayed
 With an eternal glory—which, if made
 By human hands, is not of human thought;

And Time himself hath hallowed it, not laid
One ringlet in the dust—nor hath it caught
A tinge of years, but breathes the flame with which 'twas
wrought.

CLXIV

But where is he, the Pilgrim of my song,
The being who upheld it through the past?
Methinks he cometh late and tarries long.
He is no more—these breathings are his last;
His wanderings done, his visions ebbing fast,
And he himself as nothing:—if he was
Aught but a phantasy, and could be classed
With forms which live and suffer—let that pass—
His shadow fades away into Destruction's mass,

CLXV

Which gathers shadow, substance, life, and all
That we inherit in its mortal shroud,
And spreads the dim and universal pall
Through which all things grow phantoms; and the cloud
Between us sinks and all which ever glowed,
Till Glory's self is twilight, and displays
A melancholy halo scarce allowed
To hover on the verge of darkness; rays
Sadder than saddest night, for they distract the gaze,

CLXVI

And send us prying into the abyss,
To gather what we shall be when the frame
Shall be resolved to something less than this
Its wretched essence; and to dream of fame,
And wipe the dust from off the idle name
We never more shall hear—but never more,
Oh, happier thought! can we be made the same:
It is enough in sooth that once we bore
These fardels of the heart—the heart whose sweat was gore.

CLXVII

Hark! forth from the abyss a voice proceeds,
A long low distant murmur of dread sound,
Such as arises when a nation bleeds
With some deep and immedicable wound;
Through storm and darkness yawns the rending ground.
The gulf is thick with phantoms, but the chief
Seems royal still, though with her head discrowned,
And pale, but lovely, with maternal grief
She clasps a babe, to whom her breast yields no relief.

CLXVIII

Scion of chiefs and monarchs, where art thou?
 Fond hope of many nations, art thou dead?
 Could not the grave forget thee, and lay low
 Some less majestic, less beloved head?
 In the sad midnight, while thy heart still bled,
 The mother of a moment, o'er thy boy,
 Death hushed that pang forever: with thee fled
 The present happiness and promised joy
 Which filled the imperial isles so full it seemed to cloy.

CLXIX

Peasants bring forth in safety.—Can it be,
 O thou that wert so happy, so adored!
 Those who weep not for kings shall weep for thee,
 And Freedom's heart, grown heavy, cease to hoard,
 Her many griefs for 'ONE; for she had poured
 Her orisons for thee, and o'er thy head
 Beheld her Iris.—Thou, too, lonely lord,
 And desolate consort—vainly wert thou wed!
 The husband of a year! the father of the dead!

CLXX

Of sackcloth was thy wedding garment made;
 Thy bridal's fruit is ashes: in the dust
 The fair-haired Daughter of the Isles is laid,
 The love of millions! How we did intrust
 Futurity to her! and, though it must
 Darken above our bones, yet fondly deemed
 Our children should obey her child, and blessed
 Her and her hoped-for seed, whose promise seemed
 Like star to shepherds' eyes:—'twas but a meteor beamed.

CLXXI

Woe unto us, not her; for she sleeps well:
 The fickle reek of popular breath, the tongue
 Of hollow counsel, the false oracle,
 Which from the birth of monarchy hath rung
 Its knell in princely ears, till the o'erstung
 Nations have armed in madness, the strange fate
 Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns, and hath flung
 Against their blind omnipotence a weight
 Within the opposing scale, which crushes soon or late—

CLXXII

These might have been her destiny; but no,
 Our hearts deny it: and so young, so fair,
 Good without effort, great without a foe;
 But now a bride and mother—and now there!

How many ties did that stern moment tear!
From thy sire's to his humblest subject's breast
Is linked the electric chain of that despair,
Whose shock was as an earthquake's, and opprest
The land which loved thee so that none could love thee best.

CLXXXIII

Lo, Nemi! navelled in the woody hills
So far, that the uprooting wind which tears
The oak from his foundation, and which spills
The ocean o'er its boundary, and bears
Its foam against the skies, reluctant spares
The oval mirror of thy glassy lake;
And, calm as cherished hate, its surface wears
A deep cold settled aspect naught can shake,
All coiled into itself and round, as sleeps the snake.

CLXXXIV

And near Albano's scarce divided waves
Shine from a sister valley;—and afar
The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean laves
The Latian coast where sprung the Epic war,
“Arms and the Man,” whose reascending star
Rose o'er an empire:—but beneath thy right
Tully reposed from Rome:—and where yon bar
Of girdling mountains intercepts the sight,
The Sabine farm was tilled, the weary bard's delight.

CLXXXV

But I forget.—My Pilgrim's shrine is won,
And he and I must part—so let it be—
His task and mine alike are nearly done;
Yet once more let us look upon the sea;
The midland ocean breaks on him and me,
And from the Alban Mount we now behold
Our friend of youth, that ocean, which when we
Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold
Those waves, we followed on till the dark Euxine rolled

CLXXXVI

Upon the blue Symplegades: long years—
Long, though not very many, since have done
Their work on both; some suffering and some tears
Have left us nearly where we had begun:
Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run,
We have had our reward—and it is here,
That we can yet feel gladdened by the sun,
And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear
As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.

CLXXVII

Oh! that the desert were my dwelling-place,
 With one fair spirit for my minister,
 That I might all forget the human race,
 And hating no one, love but only her!
 Ye Elements!—in whose ennobling stir
 I feel myself exalted—can ye not
 Accord me such a being? Do I err
 In deeming such inhabit many a spot?
 Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot.

CLXXVIII

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
 There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
 There is society where none intrudes,
 By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
 I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
 From these our interviews, in which I steal
 From all I may be, or have been before,
 To mingle with the Universe, and feel
 What I can ne'er express, yet can not all conceal.

CLXXIX

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
 Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
 Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
 Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain
 The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
 A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
 When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
 He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
 Without a grave, unknelled, and unknown.

CLXXX

His steps are not upon thy paths—thy fields
 Are not a spoil for him—thou dost arise
 And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
 For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
 Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
 And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
 And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
 His petty hope in some near port or bay,
 And dashest him again to earth:—there let him lay.

CLXXXI

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
 Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
 And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
 The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make

The first of the three volumes of the History of the City of Boston, published by the City of Boston, is a general history of the city from its first settlement in 1630 to the present time. It is a comprehensive and authoritative work, and is the first of a series of three volumes. The second volume is a history of the city from 1630 to 1700, and the third volume is a history of the city from 1700 to the present time. The first volume is the most important, and is the one which is most often referred to. It is a work of great value, and is a must for every student of the history of the city of Boston.

The second volume of the History of the City of Boston, published by the City of Boston, is a history of the city from 1630 to 1700. It is a comprehensive and authoritative work, and is the second of a series of three volumes. The first volume is a general history of the city from its first settlement in 1630 to the present time, and the third volume is a history of the city from 1700 to the present time. The second volume is the most important, and is the one which is most often referred to. It is a work of great value, and is a must for every student of the history of the city of Boston.

The third volume of the History of the City of Boston, published by the City of Boston, is a history of the city from 1700 to the present time. It is a comprehensive and authoritative work, and is the third of a series of three volumes. The first volume is a general history of the city from its first settlement in 1630 to the present time, and the second volume is a history of the city from 1630 to 1700. The third volume is the most important, and is the one which is most often referred to. It is a work of great value, and is a must for every student of the history of the city of Boston.



Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war;
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

CLXXXII

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters washed them power while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou,
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

CLXXXIII

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless, and sublime—
The image of Eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

CLXXXIV

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wantoned with thy breakers—they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

CLXXXV

My task is done—my song hath ceased—my theme
Has died into an echo; it is fit
The spell should break of this protracted dream.
The torch shall be extinguished which hath lit
My midnight lamp—and what is writ is writ—
Would it were worthier! but I am not now
That which I have been—and my visions flit
Less palpably before me—and the glow
Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering, faint, and low.

CLXXXVI

Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been—
 A sound which makes us linger;—yet—farewell!
 Ye! who have traced the Pilgrim to the scene
 Which is his last, if in your memories dwell
 A thought which once was his, if on ye swell
 A single recollection, not in vain
 He wore his sandal-shoon and scallop-shell;
 Farewell! with him alone may rest the pain,
 If such there were—with you, the moral of his strain.

NOTES

CANTO I

I. The little village of Castri stands partly on the site of Delphi. Along the path of the mountain, from Chryso, are the remains of sepulchres hewn in and from the rock. "One," said the guide, "of a king who broke his neck hunting." His Majesty had certainly chosen the fittest spot for such an achievement. A little above Castri is a cave, supposed the Pythian, of immense depth; the upper part of it is paved, and now a cow-house. On the other side of Castri stands a Greek monastery, some way above which is the cleft in the rock, with a range of caverns difficult of ascent, and apparently leading to the interior of the mountain, probably to the Corycian Cavern mentioned by Pausanias. From this part descend the fountain and the "Dews of Castalie."

XX. The convent of "Our Lady of Punishment," on the summit of the rock. Below is the Cork Convent, where St. Honorius dug his den, over which is his epitaph. From the hills, the sea adds to the beauty of the view.

XXI. In the year 1809, the assassinations in the streets of Lisbon and its vicinity were not confined by the Portuguese to their countrymen, but Englishmen were daily butchered; and, so far from redress being obtained, we were requested not to interfere if we perceived any compatriot defending himself against his allies. I was once stopped on the way to the theatre at eight o'clock in the evening, when the streets were not more empty than they generally are at that hour, opposite an open shop, and in a carriage with a friend: had we not fortunately been armed, I have not the least doubt that we should have "adorned a tale" instead of telling one. The crime of assassination is not confined to Portugal: in Sicily and Malta we are knocked on the head at a handsome average nightly, and not a Sicilian or Maltese is ever punished.

XXIV. The Convention of Cintra was signed in the palace of the Mar-chese Marialva.

XXIX. Her luckless Majesty went subsequently mad: and Dr. Willis, who so dexterously cudgelled kingly pericraniums, could make nothing of hers.

XXXIII. As I found the Portuguese, so I have characterized them. That they are since improved, at least in courage, is evident. The late exploits of Lord Wellington have effaced the follies of Cintra. He has, indeed, done wonders: he has, perhaps, changed the character of a nation, reconciled rival superstitions, and baffled an enemy who never retreated before his predecessors.—1812.

XXXV. Count Julian's daughter, the Helen of Spain. Pelagius pre-

served his independence in the fastnesses of the Asturias, and the descendants of his followers, after some centuries, completed their struggle by the conquest of Granada.

XLVIII. "Viva el Rey Fernando!" Long live King Ferdinand! is the chorus of most of the Spanish patriotic songs. They are chiefly in dispraise of the old King Charles, the Queen, and the Prince of Peace. I have heard many of them: some of the airs are beautiful. Don Manuel Godoy, the Principe de la Paz, of an ancient but decayed family, was born at Badajoz, on the frontiers of Portugal; and was originally in the ranks of the Spanish guards, till his person attracted the queen's eyes, and raised him to the dukedom of Alcudia. It is to this man that the Spaniards universally impute the ruin of their country.

L. The red cockade, with "Fernando VII" in the centre.

LI. All who have seen a battery will recollect the pyramidal form in which shot and shells are piled. The Sierra Morena was fortified in every defile through which I passed in my way to Seville.

LVI. Such were the exploits of the Maid of Saragoza, who by her valour elevated herself to the highest rank of heroines. When the author was at Seville, she walked daily on the Prado, decorated with medals and orders, by command of the Junta.

LXXX. The Spaniards are as revengeful as ever. At Santa Otella I heard a young peasant threaten to stab a woman (an old one, to be sure, which mitigates the offence), and was told, on expressing some surprise, that this was by no means uncommon.

LXXXV. Alluding to the conduct and death of Solano, the governor of Cadiz, in May, 1809.

LXXXVI. Palafox's answer to the French general at the siege of Saragoza.

XCI. The Honourable John Wingfield, of the Guards, who died of a fever at Coimbra, May 14, 1811. I had known him ten years—the better half of his life, and the happiest part of mine. In the short space of one month, I have lost her who gave me being, and most of those who had made that being tolerable. To me the lines of Young are no fiction:

"Insatiate archer! could not one suffice?

Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain,
And thrice ere thrice yon moon had filled her horn."

I should have ventured a verse to the memory of the late Charles Skinner Matthews, Fellow of Downing College, Cambridge, were he not too much above all praise of mine. His powers of mind, shown in the attainment of greater honours against the ablest candidates than those of any graduate on record at Cambridge, have sufficiently established his fame on the spot where it was acquired; while his softer qualities live in the recollection of his friends, who loved him too well to envy his superiority.

CANTO II

I. Part of the Acropolis was destroyed by the explosion of a magazine during the Venetian siege.

II. We can all feel, or imagine, the regret with which the ruins of cities, once the capitals of empires, are beheld; the reflections suggested by such objects are too trite to require recapitulation. But never did the littleness of man, and the vanity of his very best virtues—of patriotism to exalt, and of valour to defend his country—appear more conspicuous than in the record of what Athens was, and the certainty of what she now is. This theatre of contention between mighty factions, of the struggles of orators, the exaltation and deposition of tyrants, the triumph and punishment of generals, is now become a scene of petty intrigue and perpetual disturb-

ance, between the bickering agents of certain British nobility and gentry. "The wild foxes, the owls and serpents in the ruins of Babylon," were surely less degrading than such inhabitants. The Turks have the plea of conquest for their tyranny, and the Greeks have only suffered the fortune of war, incidental to the bravest; but how are the mighty fallen, when two painters contest the privilege of plundering the Parthenon, and triumph in turn, according to the tenor of each succeeding firman! Sylla could but punish, Philip subdue, and Xerxes burn Athens; but it remained for the paltry antiquary, and his despicable agents, to render her contemptible as himself and his pursuits. The Parthenon, before its destruction in part by fire during the Venetian siege, had been a temple, a church, and a mosque. In each point of view it is an object of regard: it changed its worshippers, but still it was a place of worship thrice sacred to devotion: its violation is a triple sacrifice. But—

"Man, proud man,
Dressed in a little brief authority,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high Heaven
As make the angels weep."

V. It was not always the custom of the Greeks to burn their dead; the greater Ajax, in particular, was interred entire. Almost all the chiefs became gods after their decease; and he was indeed neglected, who had not annual games near his tomb, or festivals in honour of his memory by his countrymen, as Achilles, Brasidas, and others, and at last even Antinous, whose death was as heroic as his life was infamous.

X. The Temple of Jupiter Olympus, of which sixteen columns, entirely of marble, yet survive: originally there were one hundred and fifty. These columns, however, are by many supposed to have belonged to the Pantheon.

XIV. According to Zosimus, Minerva and Achilles frightened Alaric from the Acropolis; but others relate that the Gothic king was nearly as mischievous as the Scottish peer.—See Chandler.

XVIII. To prevent blocks or splinters from falling on deck during action.

XL. Leucadia, now Santa Maura. From the promontory (the Lover's Leap) Sappho is said to have thrown herself. Actium and Trafalgar need no further mention. The battle of Lepanto, equally bloody and considerable, but less known, was fought in the Gulf of Patras. Here the author of *Don Quixote* lost his left hand.

XLV. It is said that, on the day previous to the battle of Actium, Antony had thirteen kings at his levee.

Nicopolis, whose ruins are most extensive, is at some distance from Actium, where the wall of the Hippodrome survives in a few fragments. These ruins are large masses of brickwork, the bricks of which are joined by interstices of mortar, as large as the bricks themselves, and equally durable.

XLVII. According to Pouqueville, the lake of Yanina: but Pouqueville is always out.

The celebrated Ali Pacha. Of this extraordinary man there is an incorrect account in Pouqueville's *Travels*.

Five thousand Suliotes, among the rocks and in the castle of Suli, withstood thirty thousand Albanians for eighteen years; the castle at last was taken by bribery. In this contest there were several acts performed not unworthy of the better days of Greece.

XLVIII. The convent and village of Zitza are four hours' journey from Joannina, or Yanina, the capital of the pachalic. In the valley the river Kalamas (once the Acheron) flows, and, not far from Zitza, forms a fine cataract. The situation is perhaps the finest in Greece, though the approach to Delvinachi and parts of Acarnania and Ætolia may contest the

palm. Delphi, Parnassus, and, in Attica, even Cape Colonna and Port Rapti, are very inferior; as also every scene in Ionia, or the Troad: I am almost inclined to add the approach to Constantinople; but, from the different features of the last, a comparison can hardly be made.

XLIX. The Greek monks are so called.

LI. The Chimariot Mountains appear to have been volcanic.

LV. The river Laos was full at the time the author passed it; and, immediately above Tepalcen, was to the eye as wide as the Thames at Westminster—at least in the opinion of the author and his fellow-traveller. In the summer it must be much narrower. It certainly is the finest river in the Levant; neither Achelous, Alpheus, Acheron, Scamander, nor Cayster approached it in breadth or beauty.

LXXI. The Albanian Mussulmans do not abstain from wine, and, indeed, very few of the others.

"Palikar," a general name for a soldier among the Greeks and Albanese who speak Romaic: it means, properly, "a lad."

LXXII. These stanzas are partly taken from different Albanese songs, as far as I was able to make them out by the exposition of the Albanese in Romaic and Italian.

"Selictar," sword-bearer; "Tambourgi," drummer.

LXXIV. Phyle, which commands a beautiful view of Athens, has still considerable remains. It was seized by Thrasybulus, previous to the expulsion of the Thirty.

LXXXV. On many of the mountains, particularly Liakura, the snow never is entirely melted, notwithstanding the intense heat of the summer; but I never saw it lie on the plains, even in winter.

LXXXVI. Of Mount Pentelicus, from which the marble was dug that constructed the public edifices of Athens. The modern name is Mount Mendeli. An immense cave, formed by the quarries, still remains, and will till the end of time.

In all Attica, if we except Athens itself and Marathon, there is no scene more interesting than Cape Colonna. To the antiquary and artist, sixteen columns are an inexhaustible source of observation and design; to the philosopher, the supposed scene of some of Plato's conversations will not be unwelcome; and the traveller will be struck with the beauty of the prospect over "isles that crown the Ægean deep:" but, for an Englishman, Colonna has yet an additional interest, as the actual spot of Falconer's "Shipwreck." Pallas and Plato are forgotten in the recollection of Falconer and Campbell:

"Here in the dead of night by Lonna's steep,
The seaman's cry was heard along the deep."

This Temple of Minerva may be seen at sea from a great distance. In two journeys which I made, and one voyage to Cape Colonna, the view from either side, by land, was more striking than the approach from the isles. In our second land excursion we had a narrow escape from a party of Mainotes, concealed in the caverns beneath. We were told afterward, by one of their prisoners, subsequently ransomed, that they were deterred from attacking us by the appearance of my two Albanians: conjecturing very sagaciously, but falsely, that we had a complete guard of these Arnaouts at hand, they remained stationary, and thus saved our party, which was too small to have opposed any effectual resistance. Colonna is no less a resort of painters than of pirates; there

"The hireling artist plants his paltry desk,
And makes degraded Nature picturesque."

(Hodgson's "Lady Jane Grey.")

But there Nature, with the aid of Art, has done that for herself. I was fortunate enough to engage a very superior German artist; and hope to

renew my acquaintance with this and many other Levantine scenes, by the arrival of his performances.

LXXXIX. "Siste Viator—heroa calcas!" was the epitaph on the famous Count Merci: what, then, must be our feelings when standing on the tumulus of the two hundred (Greeks) who fell on Marathon? The principal barrow has recently been opened by Fauvel: few or no relics were found by the excavator. The plain of Marathon was offered to me for sale at the sum of sixteen thousand piastres, about nine hundred pounds! Alas! was the dust of Miltiades worth no more? It could scarcely have fetched less if sold by weight.

CANTO III

XVIII. "In pride of place" is a term of falconry, and means the highest pitch of flight. See "Macbeth," act 2, sc. 4:

"An eagle towering in his pride of place . . ."

XX. See the famous song on Harmodius and Aristogiton. The best English translation is in "Bland's Anthology," by Mr. (now Lord Chief-Justice) Denman:

"With myrtle my sword will I wreath—"

XXI. On the night previous to the action, it is said that a ball was given at Brussels.

XXVI. Sir Evan Cameron, and his descendant Donald, the "gentle Lochiel" of the "forty-five."

XXVII. The wood of Soignies is supposed to be a remnant of the forest of Ardennes, famous in Boiardo's "Orlando," and immortal in Shakespeare's "As You Like It." It is also celebrated in Tacitus, as being the spot of successful defence by the Germans against the Roman encroachments. I have ventured to adopt the name connected with nobler associations than those of mere slaughter.

XXX. My guide from Mont St. Jean over the field seemed intelligent and accurate. The place where Major Howard fell was not far from two tall and solitary trees (there was a third, cut down, or shivered in the battle), which stand a few yards from each other at a pathway's side. Beneath these he died and was buried. The body has since been removed to England. A small hollow for the present marks where it lay, but will probably soon be effaced; the plough has been upon it, and the grain is. After pointing out the different spots where Picton and other gallant men had perished, the guide said: "Here Major Howard lay. I was near him when wounded." I told him my relationship, and he seemed then still more anxious to point out the particular spot and circumstances. The place is one of the most marked in the field, from the peculiarity of the two trees above mentioned. I went on horseback twice over the field, comparing it with my recollection of similar scenes. As a plain, Waterloo seems marked out for the scene of some great action, though this may be mere imagination. I have viewed with attention those of Platea, Troy, Mantinea, Leuctra, Chæronea, and Marathon, and the field around Mont St. Jean and Hougoumont appears to want little but a better cause, and that undefinable but impressive halo which the lapse of ages throws around a celebrated spot, to vie in interest with any or all of these, except, perhaps, the last mentioned.

XXXIV. The (fabled) apples on the brink of the lake Asphaltes were said to be fair without, and, within, ashes.

XLI. The great error of Napoleon, "if we have writ our annals true," was a continued obtrusion on mankind of his want of all community of feeling for or with them; perhaps more offensive to human vanity than the active cruelty of more trembling and suspicious tyranny. Such were

his speeches to public assemblies as well as individuals; and the single expression which he is said to have used on returning to Paris after the Russian winter had destroyed his army, rubbing his hands over a fire, "This is pleasanter than Moscow," would probably alienate more favour from his cause than the destruction and reverses which led to the remark.

XLVIII. "What wants that knave that a king should have?" was King James's question on meeting Johnny Armstrong and his followers in full accoutrements.—See the Ballad.

LV. The castle of Drachenfels stands on the highest summit of "The Seven Mountains," over the Rhine banks; it is in ruins, and connected with it are some singular traditions. It is the first in view on the road from Bonn, but on the opposite side of the river. On this bank, nearly facing it, are the remains of another, called the Jew's Castle, and a large cross commemorative of the murder of a chief by his brother. The number of castles and cities along the course of the Rhine on both sides is very great, and their situations remarkably beautiful.

LVII. The monument of the young and lamented General Marceau (killed by a rifle-ball at Altenkirchen, on the last day of the fourth year of the French Republic) still remains as described. The inscriptions on his monument are rather too long, and not required—his name was enough. France adored, and her enemies admired; both wept over him. His funeral was attended by the generals and detachments from both armies. In the same grave General Hoche is interred, a gallant man also in every sense of the word; but though he distinguished himself greatly in battle, he had not the good fortune to die there: his death was attended by suspicions of poison. A separate monument (not over his body, which is buried by Marceau's) is raised for him near Andernach, opposite to which one of his most memorable exploits was performed, in throwing a bridge to an island on the Rhine. The shape and style are different from that of Marceau, and the inscription more simple and pleasing:—"The Army of the Sambre and Meuse to its Commander-in-Chief, Hoche." This is all, and as it should be. Hoche was esteemed among the first of France's earlier generals, before Buonaparte monopolized her triumphs. He was the destined commander of the invading army of Ireland.

LVIII. Ehrenbreitstein, i. e., "the broad stone of honour," one of the strongest fortresses in Europe, was dismantled and blown up by the French at the truce of Leoben. It had been, and could only be, reduced by famine or treachery. It yielded to the former, aided by surprise. After having seen the fortifications of Gibraltar and Malta, it did not much strike by comparison; but the situation is commanding. General Marceau besieged it in vain for some time, and I slept in a room where I was shown a window at which he is said to have been standing observing the progress of the siege by moonlight when a ball struck immediately below it.

LXIII. The chapel is destroyed, and the pyramid of bones diminished to a small number by the Burgundian legion in the service of France, who anxiously effaced this record of their ancestors' less successful invasions. A few still remain, notwithstanding the pains taken by the Burgundians for ages (all who passed that way removing a bone to their own country), and the less justifiable larcenies of the Swiss postilions, who carried them off to sell for knife-handles—a purpose for which the whiteness imbibed by the bleaching of years had rendered them in great request.

Of these relics I ventured to bring away as much as may have made a quarter of a hero, for which the sole excuse is, that if I had not, the next

passer-by might have perverted them to worse uses than the careful preservation which I intend for them.

LXV. Aventicum, near Morat, was the Roman capital of Helvetia, where Avenches now stands.

LXVI. Julia Alpinula, a young Aventian priestess, died soon after a vain endeavour to save her father, condemned to death as a traitor by Aulus Cæcina. Her epitaph was discovered many years ago. It is thus:—"Julia Alpinula: Hic jaceo. Infelicis patris infelix proles. Deæ Aventiæ Sacerdos. Exorare patris necem non potui: Male mori in fati ille erat. Vixi annos XXIII."—I know of no human composition so affecting as this, nor a history of deeper interest. These are the names and actions which ought not to perish, and to which we turn with a true and healthy tenderness, from the wretched and glittering detail of a confused mass of conquests and battles, with which the mind is roused for a time to a false and feverish sympathy, from whence it recurs at length with all the nausea consequent on such intoxication.

LXVII. This is written in the eye of Mont Blanc (June 3d, 1816), which even at this distance dazzles mine.—(July 20th.) I this day observed for some time the distinct reflection of Mont Blanc and Mont Argentière in the calm of the lake, which I was crossing in my boat. The distance of these mountains from their mirror is sixty miles.

LXVIII. The following touching stanza forms part of the beautiful lines which about this time the poet addressed to his sister:—

"I did remind thee of our own dear lake,
By the old hall which may be mine no more.
Leman's is fair; but think not I forsake
The sweet remembrance of a dearer shore:
Sad havoc Time must with my memory make
Ere that or thou can fade these eyes before;
Though, like all things which I have loved, they are
Resigned forever, or divided far."

LXXI. The colour of the Rhone at Geneva is blue, to a depth of tint which I have never seen equalled in water, salt or fresh, except in the Mediterranean and Archipelago.

LXXIX. This refers to the account in his "Confessions" of his passion for the Comtesse d'Houdetot (the mistress of St. Lambert), and his long walk every morning, for the sake of the single kiss which was the common salutation of French acquaintance. Rousseau's description of his feelings on this occasion may be considered as the most passionate, yet not impure, description and expression of love that ever kindled into words; which, after all, must be felt, from their very force, to be inadequate to the delineation. A painting can give no sufficient idea of the ocean.

XCI. It is to be recollected, that the most beautiful and impressive doctrines of the Divine Founder of Christianity were delivered, not in the Temple, but on the Mount. To waive the question of devotion, and turn to human eloquence—the most effectual and splendid specimens were not pronounced within walls. Demosthenes addressed the public and popular assemblies. Cicero spoke in the forum. That this added to their effect on the mind of both orator and hearers, may be conceived from the difference between what we read of the emotions then and there produced, and those we ourselves experience in the perusal in the closet. It is one thing to read the "Iliad" at Sigæum and on the tumuli, or by the springs, with Mount Ida above, and the plain, and rivers, and Archipelago around you; and another to trim your taper over it in a snug library—this I know. Were the early and rapid progress of what is called Methodism to be attributed to any cause beyond the enthusiasm

excited by its vehement faith and doctrines (the truth or error of which I presume neither to canvass nor to question), I should venture to ascribe it to the practice of preaching in the fields, and the unstudied and extemporaneous effusions of its teachers. The Mussulmans, whose erroneous devotion (at least in the lower orders) is most sincere, and therefore impressive, are accustomed to repeat their prescribed orisons and prayers, wherever they may be, at the stated hours—of course, frequently in the open air, kneeling upon a light mat (which they carry for the purpose of a bed or cushion as required). The ceremony lasts some minutes, during which they are totally absorbed, and only living in their supplication: nothing can disturb them. On me the simple and entire sincerity of these men, and the spirit which appeared to be within and upon them, made a far greater impression than any general rite which was ever performed in places of worship, of which I have seen those of almost every persuasion under the sun—including most of our own sectaries, and the Greek, the Catholic, the Armenian, the Lutheran, the Jewish, and the Mohammedan. Many of the negroes, of whom there are numbers in the Turkish Empire, are idolaters, and have free exercise of their belief and its rites. Some of these I had a distant view of at Patras; and, from what I could make out of them, they appeared to be of a truly pagan description, and not very agreeable to a spectator.

XCIII. The thunder-storm to which these lines refer occurred on the 13th of June, 1816, at midnight. I have seen, among the Acroceraunian Mountains of Chimari, several more terrible, but none more beautiful.

CV. Voltaire and Gibbon.

CX. It is said by Rochefoucauld, that "there is always something in the misfortunes of men's best friends not displeasing to them."

CXIII.

—"If it be thus,

For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind."—Macbeth.

CANTO IV

X. The answer of the mother of Brasidas, the Lacedæmonian general, to the strangers who praised the memory of her son.

XIV. The Lion of St. Mark, the standard of the republic, which is the origin of the word "pantaloen" (Pia taleone, pantaleon, pantaloen).

XVI. The story is told in Plutarch's "Life of Nicias."

XVIII. "Venice Preserved"; "Mysteries of Udolpho"; "The Ghost-seer, or Armenian"; "The Merchant of Venice"; "Othello."

XX. Tannen is the plural of tanne, a species of fir peculiar to the Alps, which only thrives in very rocky parts, where scarcely soil sufficient for its nourishment can be found. On these spots it grows to a greater height than any other mountain tree.

XXVII. The above description may seem fantastical or exaggerated to those who have never seen an Oriental or an Italian sky, yet it is but a literal and hardly sufficient delineation of an August evening (the eighteenth), as contemplated in one of many rides along the banks of the Brenta, near La Mira.

XXXIV. The struggle is as likely to be with demons as with our better thoughts. Satan chose the wilderness for the temptation of our Saviour. And our unsullied John Locke preferred the presence of a child to complete solitude.

XLII. This and the stanza following are, with the exception of a line or two, a translation of the famous sonnet of Filicaja: "Italia, Italia, O tu cui feo la sorte!"

XLIV. The celebrated letter of Servius Sulpicius to Cicero, on the death of his daughter, describes as it then was, and now is, a path which

I often traced in Greece, both by sea and land, in different journeys and voyages. "On my return from Asia, as I was sailing from Ægina toward Megara, I began to contemplate the prospect of the countries around me. Ægina was behind, Megara before me; Piræus on the right, Corinth on the left;—all which towns, once famous and flourishing, now lie overturned and buried in their ruins. Upon this sight, I could not but think presently within myself, Alas! how do we poor mortals fret and vex ourselves if any of our friends happen to die or be killed, whose life is yet so short, when the carcasses of so many noble cities lie here exposed before me in one view."

LIV. The church of Santa Croce contains much illustrious nothing. The tombs of Machiavelli, Michael Angelo, Galileo, and Alfieri make it the Westminster Abbey of Italy. I did not admire any of these tombs—beyond their contents. That of Alfieri is heavy, and all of them seem to be overloaded. What is necessary but a bust and name? and perhaps a date?—the last for the unchronological, of whom I am one. But all your allegory and eulogy is infernal, and worse than the long wigs of English numskulls upon Roman bodies in the statuary of the reigns of Charles II, William, and Anne.—Byron's Letters, 1817.

LXIII. An earthquake, which shook all Italy, occurred during the battle, and was unfelt by any of the combatants.

LXVI. No book of travels has omitted to expatiate on the temple of the Clitumnus, between Foligno and Spoleto; and no site, or scenery, even in Italy, is more worthy a description.

LXXIII. In the greater part of Switzerland the avalanches are known by the name of *lauwine*.

LXXV. These stanzas may probably remind the reader of Ensign Northerton's remarks: "D—n Homo . . ."; but the reasons for our dislike are not exactly the same. I wish to express that we become tired of the task before we can comprehend the beauty; that we learn by rote before we can get by heart; that the freshness is worn away, and the future pleasure and advantage deadened and destroyed, by the didactic anticipation, at an age when we can neither feel nor understand the power of compositions which it requires an acquaintance with life, as well as Latin and Greek, to relish, or to reason upon. For the same reason, we never can be aware of the fulness of some of the finest passages of Shakespeare ("To be, or not to be," for instance), from the habit of having them hammered into us at eight years old, as an exercise, not of mind, but of memory; so that when we are old enough to enjoy them, the taste is gone and the appetite palled. In some parts of the continent young persons are taught from more common authors, and do not read the best classics till their maturity. I do not speak on this point from any pique or aversion toward the place of my education. I was not a slow, though an idle boy; and I believe no one could, or can, be more attached to Harrow than I have always been, and with reason; a part of the time passed there was the happiest of my life; and my preceptor, the Rev. Dr. Joseph Drury, was the best and worthiest friend I ever possessed, whose warnings I have remembered but too well, though too late, when I have erred—and whose counsels I have but followed when I have done well or wisely. If ever this imperfect record of my feelings toward him should reach his eyes, let it remind him of one who never thinks of him but with gratitude and veneration—of one who would more gladly boast of having been his pupil, if, by more closely following his injunctions, he could reflect any honour upon his instructor.

LXXXII. Orosius gives three hundred and twenty for the number of triumphs. He is followed by Panvinus; and Panvinus by Mr. Gibbon and the modern writers.

LXXXIV. Certainly, were it not for these two traits in the life of Sylla, alluded to in this stanza, we should regard him as a monster unredeemed by any admirable quality. The atonement of his voluntary resignation of empire may perhaps be accepted by us, as it seems to have satisfied the Romans, who if they had not respected must have destroyed him. There could be no mean, no division of opinion; they must have thought, like Eucrates, that what had appeared ambition was love of glory, and what had been mistaken for pride was real grandeur of soul.

LXXXVI. On the third of September Cromwell gained the victory of Dunbar; a year afterward he obtained "his crowning mercy" of Worcester; and a few years after, on the same day, which he had ever esteemed the most fortunate for him, died.

XCIII. "*Omnes pene veteres; qui nihil cognosci, nihil percepi, nihil scire posse dixerunt; augustos sensus; imbecillos animos, brevia curricula vitæ; in profundo veritatem demersam; opinionibus et institutis omnia teneri; nihil veritati relinqui; deinceps omnia tenebris circumfusa esse dixerunt.*"—*Academ. i, 13.* The eighteen hundred years which have elapsed since Cicero wrote this have not removed any of the imperfections of humanity; and the complaints of the ancient philosophers may, without injustice or affectation, be transcribed in a poem written yesterday.

XCIX. The tomb of Cecilia Metella.

CVII. The Palatine is one mass of ruins, particularly on the side toward the Circus Maximus. The very soil is formed of crumbled brickwork. Nothing can be told to satisfy the belief of any but a Roman antiquary.

CX. The Column of Trajan is surmounted by St. Peter; that of Aurelius by St. Paul.

CXI. Trajan was proverbially the best of the Roman princes, and it would be easier to find a sovereign uniting exactly the opposite characteristics than one possessed of all the happy qualities ascribed to this emperor. "When he mounted the throne," says the historian Dion, "he was strong in body, he was vigorous in mind; age had impaired none of his faculties; he was altogether free from envy and from detraction; he honoured all the good, and he advanced them; and on this account, they could not be the objects of his fear, or of his hate; he never listened to informers; he gave not way to his anger; he abstained equally from unfair exactions and unjust punishments; he had rather be loved as a man than honoured as a sovereign; he was affable with his people, respectful to the senate, and universally beloved by both; he inspired none with dread but the enemies of his country."

CXXVII. "At all events," says the author of the '*Academical Questions*,' "I trust, whatever may be the fate of my own speculations, that philosophy will regain that estimation which it ought to possess. The free and philosophic spirit of our nation has been the theme of admiration to the world. This was the proud distinction of Englishmen, and the luminous source of all their glory. Shall we then forget the manly and dignified sentiments of our ancestors, to prate in the language of the mother or the nurse about our good old prejudices? This is not the way to defend the cause of truth. It was not thus that our fathers maintained it in the brilliant periods of our history. Prejudice may be trusted to guard the outworks for a short space of time, while Reason slumbers in the citadel; but if the latter sink into a lethargy, the former will quickly erect a standard for herself. Philosophy, wisdom, and liberty support each other: he who will not reason is a bigot; he who can not, is a fool; and he who dares not, is a slave."

CXLI. Whether the wonderful statue which suggested this image be a laquearian gladiator, which, in spite of Winkelmann's criticism, has been stoutly maintained; or whether it be a Greek herald, as that great

antiquary positively asserted; or whether it is to be thought a Spartan or barbarian shield-bearer, according to the opinion of his Italian editor—it must assuredly seem a copy of that masterpiece of Ctesilaus which represented “a wounded man dying, who perfectly expressed what there remained of life in him.” Montfaucon and Maffei thought it the identical statue, but that statue was of bronze. The Gladiator was once in the Villa Ludovizi, and was bought by Clement XII. The right arm is an entire restoration of Michael Angelo.

CXLIV. Suetonius informs us that Julius Cæsar was particularly gratified by that decree of the senate which enabled him to wear a wreath of laurel on all occasions. He was anxious, not to show that he was conqueror of the world, but to hide that he was bald. A stranger at Rome would hardly have guessed at the motive, nor should we without the help of the historian.

CXLV. This is quoted in Gibbon’s “Roman Empire,” as a proof that the Coliseum was entire when seen by the Anglo-Saxon pilgrims, at the end of the seventh or the beginning of the eighth century.

CXLVI. “Though plundered of all its brass, except the ring which was necessary to preserve the aperture above; though exposed to repeated fires; though sometimes flooded by the river, and always open to the rain, no monument of equal antiquity is so well preserved as this rotunda. It passed with little alteration from the pagan into the present worship; and so convenient were its niches for the Christian altar, that Michael Angelo, ever studious of ancient beauty, introduced their design as a model in the Catholic church.”—Forsyth’s “Italy.”

CXLVII. The Pantheon has been made a receptacle for the busts of modern great, or, at least, distinguished men. The flood of light which once fell through the large orb above on the whole circle of divinities, now shines on a numerous assemblage of mortals, some one or two of whom have been almost deified by the veneration of their countrymen.

CXLVII. This and the three next stanzas allude to the story of the Roman daughter, which is recalled by the site, or pretended site, of that adventure, now shown at the Church of St. Nicholas *in carcere*.

CLII. The Castle of St. Angelo.

CLXXII. Mary died on the scaffold; Elizabeth of a broken heart; Charles V, a hermit; Louis XIV, a bankrupt in means and glory; Cromwell, of anxiety; and, “the greatest is behind”—Napoleon lives a prisoner. A long list might be added, of names equally illustrious and unhappy.

CLXXXIII. The village of Nemi was near the Arician retreat of Egeria, and, from the shades which embosomed the temple of Diana, has preserved to this day its distinctive appellation of “The Grove.” Nemi is but an evening’s ride from the comfortable inn of Albano.

CLXXIV. The whole declivity of the Alban hill is of unrivalled beauty, and from the convent on the highest point, which has succeeded to the temple of the Latian Jupiter, the prospect embraces all the objects alluded to in this stanza: the Mediterranean; the whole scene of the latter half of the *Æneid*; and the coast from beyond the mouth of the Tiber to the headland of Ciræum and the Cape of Terracina.

CLXXXII. The third line of this stanza is commonly printed:

“Thy waters wasted them while they were free,”

which is not what Byron wrote, and is nonsense. He wrote the line as we have printed it, which is in perfect accord with the theme of the entire passage. But the compositor accidentally omitted the word “power,” and the proof-reader, seeing that a change of “washed” into a word of two syllables would restore the rhythm, thought he made it right when he simply substituted a “t” for the “h,” and thus it has remained. Byron had sent the manuscript to London from Venice.

THE GIAOUR

A FRAGMENT OF A TURKISH TALE

“ One fatal remembrance—one sorrow that throws
Its bleak shade alike o’er our joys and our woes—
To which Life nothing darker nor brighter can bring,
For which joy hath no balm—and affliction no sting.”—MOORE.

TO SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.,

AS A SLIGHT BUT MOST SINCERE TOKEN OF ADMIRATION FOR HIS GENIUS,
RESPECT FOR HIS CHARACTER, AND GRATITUDE FOR HIS FRIENDSHIP, THIS
PRODUCTION IS INSCRIBED BY HIS OBLIGED AND AFFECTIONATE SERVANT,
BYRON.

LONDON, May, 1813.

ADVERTISEMENT

THE tale which these disjointed fragments present is founded upon circumstances now less common in the East than formerly; either because the ladies are more circumspect than in the “olden time,” or because the Christians have better fortune, or less enterprise. The story, when entire, contained the adventures of a female slave, who was thrown, in the Mussulman manner, into the sea for infidelity, and avenged by a young Venetian, her lover, at the time the Seven Islands were possessed by the Republic of Venice, and soon after the Arnauts were beaten back from the Morea, which they had ravaged for some time subsequent to the Russian invasion. The desertion of the Mainotes, on being refused the plunder of Misitra, led to the abandonment of that enterprise, and to the desolation of the Morea, during which the cruelty exercised on all sides was unparalleled even in the annals of the faithful.

No breath of air to break the wave
That rolls below the Athenian’s grave,
That tomb which, gleaming o’er the cliff,¹
First greets the homeward-veering skiff

High o'er the land he saved in vain ;
When shall such hero live again ?

Fair clime ! where every season smiles
Benignant o'er those blessèd isles,
Which, seen from far Colonna's height,
Make glad the heart that hails the sight,
And lend to loneliness delight.
There mildly dimpling, Ocean's cheek
Reflects the tint of many a peak
Caught by the laughing tides that lave
These Edens of the Eastern wave :
And if at times a transient breeze
Break the blue crystal of the seas,
Or sweep one blossom from the trees,
How welcome is each gentle air
That wakes and wafts the odours there !
For there—the Rose o'er crag or vale,
Sultana of the Nightingale,²

The maid for whom his melody,
His thousand songs are heard on high,
Blooms blushing to her lover's tale ;
His queen, the garden queen, his Rose,
Unbent by winds, unchilled by snows,
Far from the winters of the West,
By every breeze and season blest,
Returns the sweets by Nature given
In softest incense back to heaven ;
And grateful yields that smiling sky
Her fairest hue and fragrant sigh.
And many a summer flower is there,
And many a shade that love might share,
And many a grotto, meant for rest,
That holds the pirate for a guest ;
Whose bark in sheltering cove below
Lurks for the passing peaceful prow,
Till the gay mariner's guitar³
Is heard, and seen the evening star ;
Then stealing with the muffled oar,
Far shaded by the rocky shore,
Rush the night-prowlers on the prey,
And turn to groans his roundelay.
Strange—that where Nature loved to trace,
As if for gods, a dwelling-place,
And every charm and grace hath mixed
Within the paradise she fixed,
There man, enamoured of distress,

Should mar it into wilderness,
And trample, brute-like, o'er each flower
That tasks not one laborious hour ;
Nor claims the culture of his hand
To bloom along the fairy land,
But springs as to preclude his care,
And sweetly woos him—but to spare.
Strange—that where all is peace beside,
There passion riots in her pride,
And lust and rapine wildly reign
To darken o'er the fair domain.
It is as though the fiends prevailed
Against the seraphs they assailed,
And, fixed on heavenly thrones, should dwell
The freed inheritors of hell ;
So soft the scene, so formed for joy,
So curst the tyrants that destroy !

He who hath bent him o'er the dead
Ere the first day of death is fled,
The first dark day of nothingness,
The last of danger and distress,
(Before Decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers),
And marked the mild angelic air,
The rapture of repose that's there,
The fixed yet tender traits that streak
The languor of the placid cheek,
And—but for that sad shrouded eye,
That fires not, wins not, weeps not now,
And but for that chill, changeless brow,
Where cold Obstruction's apathy ⁴
Appals the gazing mourner's heart,
As if to him it could impart
The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon ;
Yes, but for these and these alone,
Some moments, ay, one treacherous hour,
He still might doubt the tyrant's power ;
So fair, so calm, so softly sealed,
The first, last look by death revealed ! ⁵
Such is the aspect of this shore ;
'Tis Greece, but living Greece no more !
So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,
We start, for soul is wanting there.
Hers is the loveliness in death,
That parts not quite with parting breath ;
But beauty with that fearful bloom,

That hue which haunts it to the tomb,
 Expression's last receding ray,
 A gilded halo hovering round decay,
 The farewell beam of Feeling passed away!
 Spark of that flame, perchance of heavenly birth,
 Which gleams, but warms no more its cherished earth!

Clime of the unforgotten brave!
 Whose land from plain to mountain-cave
 Was Freedom's home, or Glory's grave!
 Shrine of the mighty! can it be
 That this is all remains of thee?
 Approach, thou craven crouching slave:
 Say, is not this Thèrmopylæ?
 These waters blue that round you lave,
 O servile offspring of the free—
 Pronounce what sea, what shore is this?
 The gulf, the rock of Salamis!
 These scenes, their story not unknown,
 Arise, and make again your own;
 Snatch from the ashes of your sires
 The embers of their former fires;
 And he who in the strife expires
 Will add to theirs a name of fear
 That Tyranny shall quake to hear,
 And leave his sons a hope, a fame,
 They too will rather die than shame:
 For Freedom's battle once begun,
 Bequeathed by bleeding sire to son,
 Though baffled oft is ever won.
 Bear witness, Greece, thy living page,
 Attest it many a deathless age!
 While kings, in dusky darkness hid,
 Have left a nameless pyramid,
 Thy heroes, though the general doom
 Hath swept the column from their tomb,
 A mightier monument command,
 The mountains of their native land!
 There points thy Muse to stranger's eye
 The graves of those that can not die!
 'Twere long to tell, and sad to trace,
 Each step from splendour to disgrace:
 Enough—no foreign foe could quell
 Thy soul, till from itself it fell;
 Yes! Self-abasement paved the way
 To villain-bonds and despot sway.

What can he tell who treads thy shore ?
No legend of thine olden time,
No theme on which the muse might soar,
High as thine own in days of yore,
When man was worthy of thy clime.
The hearts within thy valleys bred,
The fiery souls that might have led
Thy sons to deeds sublime,
Now crawl from cradle to the grave,
Slaves—nay, the bondsmen of a slave,⁶
And callous, save to crime;
Stained with each evil that pollutes
Mankind, where least above the brutes;
Without even savage virtue blest,
Without one free or valiant breast.
Still to the neighbouring ports they waft
Proverbial wiles, and ancient craft;
In this the subtle Greek is found,
For this, and this alone, renowned.
In vain might Liberty invoke
The spirit to its bondage broke,
Or raise the neck that courts the yoke:
No more her sorrows I bewail,
Yet this will be a mournful tale,
And they who listen may believe,
Who heard it first had cause to grieve.

Far, dark, along the blue sea glancing,
The shadows of the rocks advancing
Start on the fisher's eye like boat
Of island-pirate or Mainote;
And fearful for his light caique,
He shuns the near but doubtful creek:
Though worn and weary with his toil,
And cumbered with his scaly spoil,
Slowly, yet strongly, plies the oar,
Till Port Leone's safer shore
Receives him by the lovely light
That best becomes an Eastern night.

Who thundering comes on blackest steed,
With slackened bit and hoof of speed!
Beneath the clattering iron's sound
The caverned echoes wake around
In lash for lash, and bound for bound;
The foam that streaks the courser's side
Seems gathered from the ocean-tide:

Though weary waves are sunk to rest,
 There's none within his rider's breast;
 And though to-morrow's tempest lour,
 'Tis calmer than thy heart, young Giaour!⁷
 I know thee not, I loathe thy race,
 But in thy lineaments I trace
 What time shall strengthen, not efface:
 Though young and pale, that sallow front
 Is scathed by fiery passion's brunt;
 Though bent on earth thine evil eye,
 As meteor-like thou glidest by,
 Right well I view and deem thee one
 Whom Othman's sons should slay or shun.

On—on he hastened, and he drew
 My gaze of wonder as he flew:
 Though like a demon of the night
 He passed, and vanished from my sight,
 His aspect and his air impressed
 A troubled memory on my breast,
 And long upon my startled ear
 Rung his dark courser's hoofs of fear.
 He spurs his steed; he nears the steep,
 That, jutting, shadows o'er the deep;
 He winds around; he hurries by;
 The rock relieves him from mine eye;
 For well I ween unwelcome he
 Whose glance is fixed on those that flee;
 And not a star but shines too bright
 On him who takes such timeless flight.
 He wound along; but ere he passed
 One glance he snatched, as if his last,
 A moment checked his wheeling steed,
 A moment breathed him from his speed,
 A moment on his stirrup stood—
 Why looks he o'er the olive wood?
 The crescent glimmers on the hill,
 The Mosque's high lamps are quivering still:
 Though too remote for sound to wake
 In echoes of the far tophaike,⁸
 The flashes of each joyous peal
 Are seen to prove the Moslem's zeal.
 To-night, set Rhamazani's sun;
 To-night, the Bairam feast's begun;
 To-night—but who and what art thou
 Of foreign garb and fearful brow?
 And what are these to thine or thee,
 That thou shouldst either pause or flee?

He stood—some dread was on his face,
Soon hatred settled in its place :
It rose not with the reddening flush
Of transient anger's hasty blush,
But pale as marble o'er the tomb,
Whose ghastly whiteness aids its gloom.
His brow was bent, his eye was glazed ;
He raised his arm, and fiercely raised,
And sternly shook his hand on high,
As doubting to return or fly :
Impatient of his flight delayed,
Here loud his raven charger neighed—
Down glanced that hand, and grasped his blade ;
That sound had burst his waking dream,
As slumber starts at owlet's scream.
The spur hath lanced his courser's sides ;
Away, away, for life he rides :
Swift as the hurled on high jerreed⁹
Springs to the touch his startled steed ;
The rock is doubled, and the shore
Shakes with the clattering tramp no more ;
The crag is won, no more is seen
His Christian crest and haughty mien.
'Twas but an instant he restrained
That fiery barb so sternly reined ;
'Twas but a moment that he stood,
Then sped as if by death pursued :
But in that instant o'er his soul
Winters of memory seemed to roll,
And gather in that drop of time
A life of pain, an age of crime.
O'er him who loves, or hates, or fears,
Such moment pours the grief of years :
What felt he then, at once opprest
By all that most distracts the breast ?
That pause, which pondered o'er his fate,
Oh, who its dreary length shall date !
Though in Time's record nearly naught,
It was Eternity to thought !
For infinite as boundless space
The thought that conscience must embrace,
Which in itself can comprehend
Woe without name, or hope, or end.

The hour is past, the Giaour is gone ;
And did he fly or fall alone ?
Woe to that hour he came or went !

The curse for Hassan's sin was sent
To turn a palace to a tomb :
He came, he went, like the Simoom,¹⁰
That harbinger of fate and gloom,
Beneath whose widely-wasting breath
The very cypress droops to death—
Dark tree, still sad when others' grief is fled,
The only constant mourner o'er the dead !

The steed is vanished from the stall ;
No serf is seen in Hassan's hall ;
The lonely spider's thin gray pall
Waves slowly widening o'er the wall ;
The bat builds in his Haram bower,
And in the fortress of his power
The owl usurps the beacon-tower ;
The wild-dog howls o'er the fountain's brim,
With baffled thirst, and famine grim ;
For the stream has shrunk from its marble bed,
Where the weeds and the desolate dust are spread.
'Twas sweet of yore to see it play
And chase the sultriness of day,
As springing high the silver dew
In whirls fantastically flew,
And flung luxurious coolness round
The air, and verdure o'er the ground.
'Twas sweet, when cloudless stars were bright,
To view the wave of watery light,
And hear its melody by night,
And oft had Hassan's childhood played
Around the verge of that cascade ;
And oft upon his mother's breast
That sound had harmonized his rest ;
And oft had Hassan's youth along
Its bank been soothed by beauty's song ;
And softer seemed each melting tone
Of music mingled with its own.
But ne'er shall Hassan's age repose
Along the brink at twilight's close :
The stream that filled that font is fled—
The blood that warmed his heart is shed !
And here no more shall human voice
Be heard to rage, regret, rejoice.
The last sad note that swelled the gale
Was woman's wildest funeral wail :
That quenched in silence, all is still,
But the lattice that flaps when the wind is shrill ;

Though raves the gust, and floods the rain,
 No hand shall close its clasp again.
 On desert sands 'twere joy to scan
 The rudest steps of fellow-man,
 So here the very voice of Grief
 Might wake an echo like relief—
 At least 'twould say, "All are not gone;
 There lingers life, though but in one"—
 For many a gilded chamber's there,
 Which solitude might well forbear;
 Within that dome as yet decay
 Hath slowly worked her cankering way—
 But gloom is gathered o'er the gate,
 Nor there the fakir's self will wait:
 Nor there will wandering dervise stay,
 For bounty cheers not his delay;
 Nor there will weary stranger halt
 To bless the sacred "bread and salt."¹¹
 Alike must wealth and poverty
 Pass heedless and unheeded by,
 For courtesy and pity died
 With Hassan on the mountain side.
 His roof, that refuge unto men,
 Is desolation's hungry den.
 The guest flies the hall, and the vassal from labour,
 Since his turban was cleft by the Infidel's sabre!¹²

I hear the sound of coming feet,
 But not a voice mine ear to greet;
 More near—each turban I can scan,
 And silver-sheathèd ataghan;¹³
 The foremost of the band is seen
 An Emir by his garb of green:¹⁴
 "Ho! who art thou?"—"This low salam¹⁵
 Replies of Moslem faith I am."
 "The burthen ye so gently bear
 Seems one that claims your utmost care,
 And, doubtless, holds some precious freight,
 My humble bark would gladly wait."
 "Thou speakest sooth; thy skiff unmoor,
 And waft us from the silent shore;
 Nay, leave the sail still furled, and ply,
 The nearest oar that's scattered by,
 And midway to those rocks where sleep
 The channelled waters dark and deep.
 Rest from your task—so—bravely done,
 Our course has been right swiftly run.

Yet 'tis the longest voyage, I trow,
That one of——"

Sullen it plunged, and slowly sank,
The calm wave rippled to the bank;
I watched it as it sank: methought
Some motion from the current caught
Bestirred it more—'twas but the beam
That checkered o'er the living stream:
I gazed, till vanishing from view,
Like lessening pebble it withdrew;
Still less and less, a speck of white
That gemmed the tide, then mocked the sight;
And all its hidden secrets sleep,
Known but to Genii of the deep,
Which, trembling in their coral caves,
They dare not whisper to the waves.

As rising on its purple wing
The insect-queen of eastern spring,¹⁶
O'er emerald meadows of Kashmeer
Invites the young pursuer near,
And leads him on from flower to flower
A weary chase and wasted hour,
Then leaves him, as it soars on high,
With panting heart and tearful eye:
So Beauty lures the full-grown child,
With hues as bright, and wing as wild;
A chase of idle hopes and fears,
Begun in folly, closed in tears.
If won, to equal ills betrayed,
Woe waits the insect and the maid;
A life of pain, the loss of peace,
From infant's play, and man's caprice:
The lovely toy so fiercely sought
Hath lost its charm by being caught,
For every touch that wooed its stay
Hath brushed its brightest hues away,
Till charm, and hue, and beauty gone,
'Tis left to fly or fall alone.
With wounded wing, or bleeding breast
Ah! where shall either victim rest?
Can this with faded pinion soar
From rose to tulip as before?
Or Beauty, blighted in an hour,
Find joy within her broken bower?
No: gayer insects fluttering by

Ne'er droop the wing o'er those that die,
 And lovelier things have mercy shown
 To every failing but their own,
 And every woe a tear can claim
 Except an erring sister's shame.

The mind, that broods o'er guilty woes,
 Is like the scorpion girt by fire,
 In circle narrowing as it glows,
 The flames around their captive close,
 Till inly searched by thousand throes,
 And maddening in her ire,
 One sad and sole relief she knows,
 The sting she nourished for her foes,
 Whose venom never yet was vain,
 Gives but one pang, and cures all pain,
 And darts into her desperate brain:
 So do the dark in soul expire,
 Or live like scorpion girt by fire;¹⁷
 So writhes the mind remorse hath riven,
 Unfit for earth, undoomed for heaven,
 Darkness above, despair beneath,
 Around it flame, within it death!

Black Hassan from the Haram flies,
 Nor bends on woman's form his eyes;
 The unwonted chase each hour employs,
 Yet shares he not the hunter's joys.
 Not thus was Hassan wont to fly
 When Leila dwelt in his Serai.
 Doth Leila there no longer dwell?
 That tale can only Hassan tell:
 Strange rumours in our city say
 Upon that eve she fled away
 When Rhamazan's last sun was set,¹⁸
 And flashing from each minaret
 Millions of lamps proclaimed the feast
 Of Bairam through the boundless East.
 'Twas then she went as to the bath,
 Which Hassan vainly searched in wrath:
 For she was flown her master's rage
 In likeness of a Georgian page,
 And far beyond the Moslem's power
 Had wronged him with the faithless Giaour.
 Somewhat of this had Hassan deemed:
 But still so fond, so fair she seemed,
 Too well he trusted to the slave

Whose treachery deserved a grave :
 And on that eve had gone to mosque,
 And thence to feast in his kiosk.
 Such is the tale his Nubians tell,
 Who did not watch their charge too well ;
 But others say, that on that night,
 By pale Phingari's trembling light,¹⁹
 The Giaour upon his jet-black steed
 Was seen, but seen alone, to speed
 With bloody spur along the shore,
 Nor maid nor page behind him bore.

Her eye's dark charm 'twere vain to tell,
 But gaze on that of the Gazelle,
 It will assist thy fancy well :
 As large, as languishingly dark,
 But Soul beamed forth in every spark
 That darted from beneath the lid,
 Bright as the jewel of Giamschid.²⁰
 Yea, Soul, and should our Prophet say
 That form was naught but breathing clay,
 By Allah ! I would answer nay ;
 Though on Al-Sirat's arch I stood,²¹
 Which totters o'er the fiery flood,
 With Paradise within my view,
 And all his Houris beckoning through.
 Oh ! who young Leila's glance could read
 And keep that portion of his creed,
 Which saith that woman is but dust,
 A soulless toy for tyrant's lust ?²²
 On her might Muftis gaze, and own
 That through her eye the Immortal shone ;
 On her fair cheek's unfading hue
 The young pomegranate's blossoms strew²³
 Their bloom in blushes ever new :
 Her hair in hyacinthine flow,²⁴
 When left to roll its folds below,
 As midst her handmaids in the hall
 She stood superior to them all,
 Hath swept the marble where her feet
 Gleamed whiter than the mountain sleet,
 Ere from the cloud that gave it birth
 It fell, and caught one stain of earth.
 The cygnet nobly walks the water :
 So moved on earth Circassia's daughter,
 The loveliest bird of Frangestan !
 As rears her crest the ruffled swan,

And spurns the wave with wings of pride,
When pass the steps of stranger man
Along the banks that bound her tide;
Thus rose fair Leila's whiter neck :—
Thus armed with beauty would she check
Intrusion's glance, till Folly's gaze
Shrunk from the charms it meant to praise :
Thus high and graceful was her gait ;
Her heart as tender to her mate ;
Her mate—stern Hassan, who was he ?
Alas ! that name was not for thee !

Stern Hassan hath a journey ta'en
With twenty vassals in his train,
Each armed, as best becomes a man,
With arquebuss and ataghan ;
The chief before, as decked for war,
Bears in his belt the scimitar
Stained with the best of Arnaut blood,
When in the pass the rebels stood,
And few returned to tell the tale
Of what befell in Parne's vale.
The pistols which his girdle bore
Were those that once a pacha wore,
Which still, though gemmed and bossed with gold,
Even robbers tremble to behold.
'Tis said he goes to woo a bride
More true than her who left his side ;
The faithless slave that broke her bower,
And, worse than faithless, for a Giaour !

The sun's last rays are on the hill,
And sparkle in the fountain rill,
Whose welcome waters, cool and clear,
Draw blessings from the mountaineer ;
Here may the loitering merchant Greek
Find that repose 'twere vain to seek
In cities lodged too near his lord,
And trembling for his secret hoard—
Here may he rest where none can see,
In crowds a slave, in deserts free ;
And with forbidden wine may stain
The bowl a Moslem must not drain.

The foremost Tartar's in the gap,
Conspicuous by his yellow cap ;
The rest in lengthening line the while

Wind slowly through the long defile :
 Above, the mountain rears a peak,
 Where vultures whet the thirsty beak ;
 And theirs may be a feast to-night,
 Shall tempt them down ere morrow's light ;
 Beneath, a river's wintry stream
 Has shrunk before the summer beam,
 And left a channel bleak and bare,
 Save shrubs that spring to perish there :
 Each side the midway path there lay
 Small broken crags of granite gray,
 By time, or mountain lightning, riven
 From summits clad in mists of heaven ;
 For where is he that hath beheld
 The peak of Liakura unveiled ?

They reach the grove of pine at last :
 " Bismillah ! now the peril's past ; ²⁵
 For yonder view the opening plain,
 And there we'll prick our steeds amain : "
 The Chiaus spake, and as he said,
 A bullet whistled o'er his head ;
 The foremost Tartar bites the ground !
 Scarce had they time to check the rein,
 Swift from their steeds the riders bound ;
 But three shall never mount again :
 Unseen the foes that gave the wound,
 The dying ask revenge in vain.
 With steel unsheathed, and carbine bent,
 Some o'er their courser's harness leant,
 Half sheltered by the steed ;
 Some fly behind the nearest rock,
 And there await the coming shock,
 Nor tamely stand to bleed
 Beneath the shaft of foes unseen,
 Who dare not quit their craggy screen.
 Stern Hassan only from his horse
 Disdains to light, and keeps his course,
 Till fiery flashes in the van
 Proclaim too sure the robber-clan
 Have well secured the only way
 Could now avail the promised prey ;
 Then curled his very beard with ire, ²⁶
 And glared his eye with fiercer fire :
 " Though far and near the bullets hiss,
 I've 'scaped a bloodier hour than this."
 And now the foe their covert quit,

And call his vassals to submit ;
But Hassan's frown and furious word
Are dreaded more than hostile sword,
Nor of his little band a man
Resigned carbine or ataghan,
Nor raised the craven cry, Amaun ! ²⁷
In fuller sight, more near and near,
The lately ambushed foes appear,
And, issuing from the grove, advance
Some who on battle-charger prance.
Who leads them on with foreign brand,
Far flashing in his red right hand ?
" 'Tis he ! 'tis he ! I know him now ;
I know him by his pallid brow ;
I know him by the evil eye ²⁸
That aids his envious treachery ;
I know him by his jet-black barb :
Though now arrayed in Arnaut garb,
Apostate from his own vile faith,
It shall not save him from the death :
'Tis he ! well met in any hour,
Lost Leila's love, accursed Giaour ! "

As rolls the river into ocean,
In sable torrent wildly streaming ;
As the sea-tide's opposing motion,
In azure column proudly gleaming,
Beats back the current many a rood,
In curling foam and mingling flood,
While eddying whirl, and breaking wave,
Roused by the blasts of winter, rave ;
Through sparkling spray, in thundering clash,
The lightnings of the waters flash
In awful whiteness o'er the shore,
That shines and shakes beneath the roar ;
Thus—as the stream and ocean greet,
With waves that madden as they meet—
Thus join the bands, whom mutual wrong,
And fate, and fury, drive along.
The bickering sabres' shivering jar ;
And pealing wide or ringing near
Its echoes on the throbbing ear,
The deathshot hissing from afar ;
The shock, the shout, the groan of war,
Reverberate along that vale,
More suited to the shepherd's tale :
Though few the numbers—theirs the strife,
That neither spares nor speaks for life !

Ah! fondly youthful hearts can press,
 To seize and share the dear caress;
 But Love itself could never pant
 For all that Beauty sighs to grant,
 With half the fervour Hate bestows
 Upon the last embrace of foes,
 When grappling in the fight they fold
 Those arms that ne'er shall lose their hold:
 Friends meet to part; Love laughs at faith;
 True foes, once met, are joined till death!

With sabre shivered to the hilt,
 Yet dripping with the blood he spilt;
 Yet strained within the severed hand
 Which quivers round that faithless brand;
 His turban far behind him rolled,
 And cleft in twain its firmest fold;
 His flowing robe by falchion torn,
 And crimson as those clouds of morn
 That, streaked with dusky red, portend
 The day shall have a stormy end;
 A stain on every bush that bore
 A fragment of his palampore,²⁹
 His breast with wounds unnumbered riven,
 His back to earth, his face to heaven,
 Fallen Hassan lies—his unclosed eye
 Yet louring on his enemy,
 As if the hour that sealed his fate
 Surviving left his quenchless hate;
 And o'er him bends that foe, with brow
 As dark as his that bled below.—

“Yes, Leila sleeps beneath the wave,
 But his shall be a redder grave;
 Her spirit pointed well the steel
 Which taught that felon heart to feel.
 He called the Prophet, but his power
 Was vain against the vengeful Giaour:
 He called on Allah—but the word
 Arose unheeded or unheard.
 Thou Paynim fool! could Leila's prayer
 Be passed, and thine accorded there?
 I watched my time, I leagued with these,
 The traitor in his turn to seize;
 My wrath is wreaked, the deed is done,
 And now I go—but go alone.”

The browsing camels' bells are tinkling :
 His mother looked from her lattice high—
 She saw the dews of eve besprinkling
 The pasture green beneath her eye,
 She saw the planets faintly twinkling :
 " 'Tis twilight—sure his train is nigh."
 She could not rest in the garden-bower,
 But gazed through the grate of his steepest tower :
 " Why comes he not ? his steeds are fleet,
 Nor shrink they from the summer heat ;
 Why sends not the bridegroom his promised gift ?
 Is his heart more cold, or his barb less swift ?
 Oh, false reproach ! yon Tartar now
 Has gained our nearest mountain's brow,
 And warily the steep descends,
 And now within the valley bends ;
 And he bears the gift at his saddle-bow—
 How could I deem his courser slow ?
 Right well my largess shall repay
 His welcome speed, and weary way."

The Tartar lighted at the gate,
 But scarce upheld his fainting weight ;
 His swarthy visage spake distress,
 But this might be from weariness ;
 His garb with sanguine spots was dyed,
 But these might be from his courser's side ;
 He drew the token from his vest—
 Angel of Death ! 'tis Hassan's cloven crest !
 His calpac³⁰ rent—his caftan red—
 " Lady, a fearful bride thy son hath wed :
 Me, not from mercy, did they spare,
 But this empurpled pledge to bear.
 Peace to the brave ! whose blood is spilt :
 Woe to the Giaour ! for his the guilt."

A turban carved in coarsest stone,³¹
 A pillar with rank weeds o'ergrown,
 Whereon can now be scarcely read
 The Koran verse that mourns the dead,
 Point out the spot where Hassan fell
 A victim in that lonely dell.
 There sleeps as true an Osmanlie
 As e'er at Mecca bent the knee ;
 As ever scorned forbidden wine,
 Or prayed with face toward the shrine,
 In orisons resumed anew

At solemn sound of "Allah Hu!"³²
Yet died he by a stranger's hand,
And stranger in his native land;
Yet died he as in arms he stood,
And unavenged, at least in blood.
But him the maids of Paradise
Impatient to their halls invite,
And the dark Heaven of Houris' eyes
On him shall glance forever bright;
They come—their kerchiefs green they wave,³³
And welcome with a kiss the brave!
Who falls in battle 'gainst a Giaour
Is worthiest an immortal bower.

But thou, false Infidel! shalt writhe
Beneath avenging Monkir's scythe;³⁴
And from its torment 'scape alone
To wander round lost Eblis' throne;³⁵
And fire unquenched, unquenchable,
Around, within, thy heart shall dwell;
Nor ear can hear nor tongue can tell
The tortures of that inward hell!
But first, on earth as Vampire sent,³⁶
Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent:
Then ghastly haunt thy native place,
And suck the blood of all thy race:
There from thy daughter, sister, wife,
At midnight drain the stream of life;
Yet loathe the banquet which perforce
Must feed thy livid living corse:
Thy victims ere they yet expire
Shall know the demon for their sire,
As cursing thee, thou cursing them,
Thy flowers are withered on the stem.
But one that for thy crime must fall,
The youngest, most beloved of all,
Shall bless thee with a father's name—
That word shall wrap thy heart in flame!
Yet must thou end thy task, and mark
Her cheek's last tinge, her eye's last spark,
And the last glassy glance must view
Which freezes o'er its lifeless blue;
Then with unhallowed hand shalt tear
The tresses of her yellow hair,
Of which in life a lock when shorn
Affection's fondest pledge was worn;
But now is borne away by thee,

Memorial of thine agony !
Wet with thine own best blood shall drip ³⁷
Thy gnashing tooth, and haggard lip ;
Then stalking to thy sullen grave,
Go—and with Ghouls and Afrits rave ;
Till these in horror shrink away
From spectre more accursed than they !

“ How name ye yon lone Caloyer ?

His features I have scanned before
In mine own land : 'tis many a year,
Since, dashing by the lonely shore,
I saw him urge as fleet a steed
As ever served a horseman's need.
But once I saw that face, yet then
It was so marked with inward pain,
I could not pass it by again ;
It breathes the same dark spirit now,
As death were stamped upon his brow.”

“ 'Tis twice three years at summer tide
Since first among our frères he came ;
And here it soothes him to abide

For some dark deed he will not name.
But never at our vesper prayer,
Nor e'er before confession chair
Kneels he, nor recks he when arise
Incense or anthem to the skies.
But broods within his cell alone,
His faith and race alike unknown.
The sea from Paynim land he crost,
And here ascended from the coast ;
Yet seems he not of Othman race,
But only Christian in his face :
I'd judge him some stray renegade,
Repentant of the change he made,
Save that he shuns our holy shrine,
Nor tastes the sacred bread and wine.
Great largess to these walls he brought,
And thus our abbot's favour bought ;
But were I prior, not a day
Should brook such stranger's further stay,
Or pent within our penance cell
Should doom him there for aye to dwell.
Much in his visions mutters he
Of maiden whelmed beneath the sea :
Of sabres clashing, foemen flying,
Wrongs avenged, and Moslem dying.

On cliff he hath been known to stand,
And rave as to some bloody hand,
Fresh severed from its parent limb,
Invisible to all but him,
Which beckons onward to his grave,
And lures to leap into the wave."

Dark and unearthly is the scowl
That glares beneath his dusky cowl:
The flash of that dilating eye
Reveals too much of times gone by;
Though varying, indistinct its hue,
Oft will his glance the gazer rue,
For in it lurks that nameless spell,
Which speaks, itself unspeakable,
A spirit yet unquelled and high,
That claims and keeps ascendancy;
And like the bird whose pinions quake,
But can not fly the gazing snake,
Will others quail beneath his look,
Nor 'scape the glance they scarce can brook.
From him the half-affrighted Friar
When met alone would fain retire,
As if that eye and bitter smile
Transferred to others fear and guile:
Not oft to smile descendeth he,
And when he doth 'tis sad to see
That he but mocks at Misery.
How that pale lip will curl and quiver!
Then fix once more as if forever;
As if his sorrow or disdain
Forbade him e'er to smile again.
Well were it so—such ghastly mirth
From joyaunce ne'er derived its birth.
But sadder still it were to trace
What once were feelings in that face;
Time hath not yet the features fixed,
But brighter traits with evil mixed;
And there are hues not always faded,
Which speak a mind not all degraded,
Even by the crimes through which it waded.
The common crowd but see the gloom
Of wayward deeds, and fitting doom;
The close observer can espy
A noble soul, and lineage high:
Alas! though both bestowed in vain,
Which grief could change, and guilt could stain,

It was no vulgar tenement
To which such lofty gifts were lent,
And still with little less than dread
On such the sight is riveted.
The roofless cot, decayed and rent,
Will scarce delay the passer-by;
The tower by war or tempest bent,
While yet may frown one battlement,
Demands and daunts the stranger's eye;
Each ivied arch, and pillar lone,
Pleads haughtily for glories gone!

"His floating robe around him folding,
Slow sweeps he through the columned aisle;
With dread beheld, with gloom beholding
The rites that sanctify the pile.
But when the anthem shakes the choir,
And kneel the monks, his steps retire;
By yonder lone and wavering torch
His aspect glares within the porch;
There will he pause till all is done—
And hear the prayer, but utter none.
See—by the half-illuminated wall
His hood fly back, his dark hair fall,
That pale brow wildly wreathing round,
As if the Gorgon there had bound
The sablest of the serpent-braid,
That o'er her fearful forehead strayed;
For he declines the convent oath,
And leaves those locks' unhallowed growth,
But wears our garb in all beside;
And, not from piety but pride,
Gives wealth to walls that never heard
Of his one holy vow nor word.
Lo!—mark ye, as the harmony
Peals louder praises to the sky,
That livid cheek, that stony air
Of mixed defiance and despair!
St. Francis, keep him from the shrine!
Else may we dread the wrath divine
Made manifest by awful sign.
If ever evil angel bore
The form of mortal, such he wore:
By all my hope of sins forgiven,
Such looks are not of earth nor heaven!"

To love the softest hearts are prone,
But such can ne'er be all his own;

Too timid in his woes to share,
 Too meek to meet, or brave despair :
 And sterner hearts alone may feel
 The wound that time can never heal.
 The rugged metal of the mine,
 Must burn before its surface shine,
 But plunged within the furnace-flame,
 It bends and melts—though still the same ;
 Then, tempered to thy want, or will,
 'Twill serve thee to defend or kill :
 A breastplate for thine hour of need,
 Or blade to bid thy foeman bleed ;
 But if a dagger's form it bear,
 Let those who shape its edge beware !
 Thus passion's fire, and woman's art,
 Can turn and tame the sterner heart ;
 From these its form and tone are ta'en,
 And what they make it, must remain,
 But break—before it bend again.

If solitude succeed to grief,
 Release from pain is slight relief ;
 The vacant bosom's wilderness
 Might thank the pang that made it less.
 We loathe what none are left to share :
 Even bliss—'twere woe alone to bear ;
 The heart once left thus desolate
 Must fly at once for ease to hate.
 It is as if the dead could feel
 The icy worm around them steal,
 And shudder, as the reptiles creep
 To revel o'er their rotting sleep,
 Without the power to scare away
 The cold consumers of their clay !
 It is as if the desert-bird,³⁸

Whose beak unlocks her bosom's stream
 To still her famished nestlings' scream,
 Nor mourns a life to them transferred,
 Should rend her rash devoted breast,
 And find them flown her empty nest.
 The keenest pangs the wretched find
 Are rapture to the dreary void,
 The leafless desert of the mind,
 The waste of feelings unemployed.
 Who would be doomed to gaze upon
 A sky without a cloud or sun !
 Less hideous far the tempest's roar

Than ne'er to brave the billows more—
Thrown, when the war of winds is o'er,
A lonely wreck on fortune's shore,
'Mid sullen calm, and silent bay,
Unseen to drop by dull decay;—
Better to sink beneath the shock
Than moulder piecemeal on the rock !

“ Father ! thy days have passed in peace,
'Mid counted beads, and countless prayer ;
To bid the sins of others cease,
Thyself without a crime or care,
Save transient ills that all must bear,
Has been thy lot from youth to age ;
And thou wilt bless thee from the rage
Of passions fierce and uncontrolled,
Such as thy penitents unfold,
Whose secret sins and sorrows rest
Within thy pure and pitying breast.
My days, though few, have passed below
In much of joy, but more of woe ;
Yet still, in hours of love or strife,
I've 'scaped the weariness of life :
Now leagued with friends, now girt by foes,
I loathed the languor of repose.
Now nothing left to love or hate,
No more with hope or pride elate,
I'd rather be the thing that crawls
Most noxious o'er a dungeon's walls,
Than pass my dull, unvarying days,
Condemned to meditate and gaze.
Yet, lurks a wish within my breast
For rest—but not to feel 'tis rest.
Soon shall my fate that wish fulfil :
And I shall sleep without the dream
Of what I was, and would be still,
Dark as to thee my deeds may seem :
My memory now is but the tomb
Of joys long dead ; my hope, their doom :
Though better to have died with those
Than bear a life of lingering woes.
My spirit shrunk not to sustain
The searching throes of ceaseless pain ;
Nor sought the self-accorded grave
Of ancient fool and modern knave :
Yet death I have not feared to meet ;
And in the field it had been sweet,

Had danger wooed me on to move
 The slave of glory, not of love.
 I've braved it—not for honour's boast;
 I smile at laurels won or lost;
 To such let others carve their way,
 For high renown, or hireling pay:
 But place again before my eyes
 Aught that I deem a worthy prize;
 The maid I love, the man I hate,
 And I will hunt the steps of fate,
 To save or slay, as these require,
 Through rending steel, and rolling fire:
 Nor need'st thou doubt this speech from one
 Who would but do—what he hath done.
 Death is but what the haughty brave,
 The weak must bear, the wretch must crave;
 Then let life go to Him who gave;
 I have not quailed to danger's brow
 When high and happy—need I now?

"I loved her, Friar! nay, adored—
 But these are words that all can use—
 I proved it more in deed than word;
 There's blood upon that dinted sword,
 A stain its steel can never lose:
 'Twas shed for her, who died for me,
 It warmed the heart of one abhorred:
 Nay, start not—no—nor bend thy knee,
 Nor midst my sins such act record;
 Thou wilt absolve me from the deed,
 For he was hostile to thy creed:
 The very name of Nazarene
 Was wormwood to his Paynim spleen.
 Ungrateful fool! since but for brands
 Well wielded in some hardy hands,
 And wounds by Galileans given,
 The surest pass to Turkish heaven,
 For him his Houris still might wait
 Impatient at the Prophet's gate.
 I loved her—love will find its way
 Through paths where wolves would fear to prey;
 And if it dares enough, 'twere hard
 If passion met not some reward—
 No matter how, or where, or why,
 I did not vainly seek, nor sigh:
 Yet sometimes, with remorse, in vain
 I wish she had not loved again.

She died—I dare not tell thee how;
 But look—'tis written on my brow!
 There read of Cain the curse and crime,
 In characters unworn by time:
 Still, ere thou dost condemn me, pause;
 Not mine the act, though I the cause.
 Yet did he but what I had done
 Had she been false to more than one.
 Faithless to him, he gave the blow;
 But true to me, I laid him low:
 Howe'er deserved her doom might be,
 Her treachery was truth to me;
 To me she gave her heart, that all
 Which tyranny can ne'er enthrall;
 And I, alas! too late to save!
 Yet all I then could give, I gave—
 'Twas some relief—our foe a grave.
 His death sits lightly; but her fate
 Has made me—what thou well may'st hate.

His doom was sealed—he knew it well,
 Warned by the voice of stern Taheer,
 Deep in whose darkly boding ear³⁹
 The deathshot pealed of murder near,

As filed the troop to where they fell!
 He died too in the battle broil,
 A time that heeds nor pain nor toil;
 One cry to Mohammed for aid,
 One prayer to Allah all he made:
 He knew and crossed me in the fray—
 I gazed upon him where he lay,
 And watched his spirit ebb away:
 Though pierced like pard by hunters' steel,
 He felt not half that now I feel.
 I searched, but vainly searched, to find
 The workings of a wounded mind;
 Each feature of that sullen corse
 Betrayed his rage, but no remorse.
 Oh, what had Vengeance given to trace
 Despair upon his dying face!
 The late repentance of that hour,
 When Penitence hath lost her power
 To tear one terror from the grave,
 And will not soothe, and can not save.

"The cold in clime are cold in blood,
 Their love can scarce deserve the name,
 But mine was like the lava flood

That boils in Ætna's breast of flame.
I can not prate in puling strain
Of ladye-love, and beauty's chain :
If changing cheek, and scorching vein,
Lips taught to writhe, but not complain,
If bursting heart, and madd'ning brain,
And daring deed, and vengeful steel,
And all that I have felt, and feel,
Betoken love—that love was mine,
And shown by many a bitter sign.
'Tis true, I could not whine nor sigh,
I knew but to obtain or die.
I die—but first, I have possessed,
And come what may, I have been blessed.
Shall I the doom I sought upbraid ?
No—reft of all, yet undismayed
But for the thought of Leila slain,
Give me the pleasure with the pain,
So would I live and love again.
I grieve, but not, my holy guide !
For him who dies, but her who died :
She sleeps beneath the wandering wave—
Ah ! had she but an earthly grave,
This breaking heart and throbbing head
Should seek and share her narrow bed.
She was a form of life and light,
That, seen, became a part of sight ;
And rose, where'er I turned my eye,
The Morning-star of Memory !

“ Yes, Love indeed is light from heaven ;
A spark of that immortal fire
With angels shared, by Allah given,
To lift from earth our low desire.
Devotion wafts the mind above,
But Heaven itself descends in love ;
A feeling from the Godhead caught,
To wean from self each sordid thought ;
A ray of Him who formed the whole :
A glory circling round the soul !
I grant my love imperfect, all
That mortals by the name miscall ;
Then deem it evil, what thou wilt ;
But say, oh say, hers was not guilt !
She was my life's unerring light :
That quenched, what beam shall break my night ?
Oh ! would it shone to lead me still,

Although to death or deadliest ill!
Why marvel ye, if they who lose
This present joy, this future hope,
No more with sorrow meekly cope;
In frenzy then their fate accuse:
In madness do those fearful deeds
That seem to add but guilt to woe?
Alas! the breast that inly bleeds
Hath naught to dread from outward blow:
Who falls from all he knows of bliss,
Cares little into what abyss.
Fierce as the gloomy vulture's now
To thee, old man, my deeds appear:
I read abhorrence on thy brow.
And this too was I born to bear!
'Tis true, that, like that bird of prey,
With havoc have I marked my way:
But this was taught me by the dove,
To die—and know no second love.
This lesson yet hath man to learn,
Taught by the thing he dares to spurn!
The bird that sings within the brake,
The swan that swims upon the lake,
One mate, and one alone, will take.
And let the fool still prone to range,
And sneer on all who can not change,
Partake his jest with boasting boys;
I envy not his varied joys,
But deem such feeble, heartless man,
Less than yon solitary swan;
Far, far beneath the shallow maid
He left believing and betrayed.
Such shame at least was never mine—
Lcila! each thought was only thine!
My good, my guilt, my weal, my woe,
My hope on high—my all below.
Earth holds no other like to thee,
Or, if it doth, in vain for me:
For worlds I dare not view the dame
Resembling thee, yet not the same.
The very crimes that mar my youth,
This bed of death—attest my truth!
'Tis all too late—thou wert, thou art
The cherished madness of my heart!

“And she was lost—and yet I breathed,
But not the breath of human life;

A serpent round my heart was wreathed,
 And stung my every thought to strife,
 Alike all time, abhorred all place,
 Shuddering I shrunk from Nature's face,
 Where every hue that charmed before
 The blackness of my bosom wore.
 The rest thou dost already know,
 And all my sins, and half my woe.
 But talk no more of penitence;
 Thou see'st I soon shall part from hence :
 And if thy holy tale were true,
 The deed that's done, canst thou undo ?
 Think me not thankless—but this grief
 Looks not to priesthood for relief.⁴⁰
 My soul's estate in secret guess :
 But wouldst thou pity more, say less.
 When thou canst bid my Leila live,
 Then will I sue thee to forgive ;
 Then plead my cause in that high place
 Where purchased masses proffer grace.
 Go, when the hunter's hand hath wrung
 From forest-cave her shrieking young,
 And calm the lonely lioness :
 But soothe not—mock not my distress !

“In earlier days, and calmer hours,
 When heart with heart delights to blend,
 Where bloom my native valley's bowers,
 I had—ah ! have I now ?—a friend !
 To him this pledge I charge thee send,
 Memorial of a youthful vow ;
 I would remind him of my end :
 Though souls absorbed like mine allow
 Brief thought to distant friendship's claim,
 Yet dear to him my blighted name.
 'Tis strange—he prophesied my doom,
 And I have smiled—I then could smile—
 When Prudence would his voice assume,
 And warn—I recked not what—the while :
 But now remembrance whispers o'er
 Those accents scarcely marked before.
 Say—that his bodings came to pass,
 And he will start to hear their truth,
 And wish his words had not been sooth :
 Tell him, unheeding as I was,
 Through many a busy bitter scene
 Of all our golden youth had been,

In pain, my faltering tongue had tried
To bless his memory ere I died ;
But Heaven in wrath would turn away,
If Guilt should for the guiltless pray.
I do not ask him not to blame,
Too gentle he to wound my name ;
And what have I to do with fame ?
I do not ask him not to mourn,
Such cold request might sound like scorn ;
And what than friendship's manly tear
May better grace a brother's bier ?
But bear this ring, his own of old,
And tell him—what thou dost behold !
The withered frame, the ruined mind,
The wrack by passion left behind,
A shrivelled scroll, a scattered leaf,
Seared by the autumn blast of grief !

“ Tell me no more of fancy's gleam,
No, father, no, 'twas not a dream ;
Alas ! the dreamer first must sleep,
I only watched, and wished to weep ;
But could not, for my burning brow
Throbb'd to the very brain as now :
I wished but for a single tear,
As something welcome, new, and dear ;
I wished it then, I wish it still ;
Despair is stronger than my will.
Waste not thine orison, despair
Is mightier than thy pious prayer :
I would not, if I might, be blest ;
I want no paradise, but rest.
'Twas then, I tell thee, father ! then
I saw her ; yes, she lived again ;
And shining in her white symar,⁴¹
As through yon pale gray cloud the star
Which now I gaze on, as on her,
Who looked, and looks far lovelier ;
Dimly I view its trembling spark ;
To-morrow's night shall be more dark ;
And I, before its rays appear,
That lifeless thing the living fear.
I wander, father ! for my soul
Is fleeting toward the final goal.
I saw her, friar ! and I rose
Forgetful of our former woes ;
And rushing from my couch, I dart,

And clasp her to my desperate heart;
 I clasp—what is it that I clasp?
 No breathing form within my grasp,
 No heart that beats reply to mine,
 Yet, Leila! yet the form is thine!
 And art thou, dearest, changed so much,
 As meet my eye, yet mock my touch?
 Ah! were thy beauties e'er so cold,
 I care not; so my arms unfold
 The all they ever wished to hold.
 Alas! around a shadow prest,
 They shrink upon my lonely breast;
 Yet still 'tis there! In silence stands,
 And beckons with beseeching hands!
 With braided hair, and bright-black eye—
 I knew 'twas false—she could not die!
 But he is dead! within the dell
 I saw him buried where he fell;
 He comes not, for he can not break
 From earth; why then art thou awake?
 They told me wild waves rolled above
 The face I view, the form I love:
 They told me—'twas a hideous tale!
 I'd tell it, but my tongue would fail:
 If true, and from thine ocean-cave
 Thou com'st to claim a calmer grave;
 Oh! pass thy dewy fingers o'er
 This brow that then will burn no more;
 Or place them on my hopeless heart:
 But, shape or shade! whate'er thou art,
 In mercy ne'er again depart!
 Or farther with thee bear my soul
 Than winds can waft and waters roll!

"Such is my name, and such my tale.
 Confessor! to thy secret ear
 I breathe the sorrows I bewail,
 And thank thee for the generous tear
 This glazing eye could never shed.
 Then lay me with the humblest dead,
 And, save the cross above my head,
 Be neither name nor emblem spread,
 By prying stranger to be read,
 Or stay the passing pilgrim's tread."

He passed—nor of his name and race
 Hath left a token or a trace,

Save what the father must not say
 Who shrived him on his dying day :
 This broken tale was all we knew
 Of her he loved, or him he slew.⁴²

NOTES

¹ A tomb above the rocks on the promontory, by some supposed to be the sepulchre of Themistocles.

² The attachment of the nightingale to the rose is a well-known Persian fable. If I mistake not, the "Bulbul of a thousand tales" is one of his appellations.

³ The guitar is the constant amusement of the Greek sailor by night : with a steady fair wind, and during a calm, it is accompanied always by the voice, and often by dancing.

⁴ "Ay, but to die and go we know not where,
 To lie in cold obstruction."

Measure for Measure, Act iii, Sc. 2.

⁵ I trust that few of my readers ever have had an opportunity of witnessing what is here attempted in description ; but those who have will probably retain a painful remembrance of that singular beauty which pervades, with few exceptions, the features of the dead, a few hours, and but for a few hours, after "the spirit is not there." It is to be remarked, in cases of violent death by gun-shot wounds, the expression is always that of languor, whatever the natural energy of the sufferer's character : but in death from a stab, the countenance preserves its traits of feeling or ferocity, and the mind, its bias, to the last.

⁶ Athens is the property of the Kislar Aga (the slave of the seraglio and guardian of the women), who appoints the Waywode. A pander and eunuch—these are not polite, yet true, appellations—now governs the governor of Athens.

⁷ Infidel.

⁸ "Tophaike," musket.—The Bairam is announced by the cannon at sunset ; the illumination of the Mosques, and the firing of all kinds of small arms, loaded with ball, proclaim it during the night.

⁹ Jerreed, or Djerrid, a blunted Turkish javelin, which is darted from horseback with great force and precision. It is a favourite exercise of the Mussulmans ; but I know not if it can be called a manly one, since the most expert in the art are the black eunuchs of Constantinople. I think, next to these, a Mamlouk at Smyrna was the most skilful that came within my observation.

¹⁰ The blast of the desert, fatal to everything living, and often alluded to in Eastern poetry.

¹¹ To partake of food, to break bread and salt with your host, insures the safety of the guest : even though an enemy, his person from that moment is sacred.

¹² I need hardly observe that Charity and Hospitality are the first duties enjoined by Mohammed ; and to say truth, very generally practised by his disciples. The first praise that can be bestowed on a chief is a panegyric on his bounty ; the next, on his valour.

¹³ The ataghan, a long dagger worn with pistols in the belt, in a metal scabbard, generally of silver ; and, among the wealthier, gilt, or of gold.

¹⁴ Green is the privileged colour of the Prophet's numerous pretended descendants ; with them, as here, faith (the family inheritance) is sup-

posed to supersede the necessity of good works: they are the worst of a very indifferent brood.

¹⁵ "Salam aleikoum! aleikoum salam!"—"Peace be with you; be with you peace"—the salutation reserved for the Faithful:—to a Christian, "Urlarula!"—"A good journey"; or, "Saban hiresem, saban serula!"—"Good morn, good even"; and sometimes, "May your end be happy," are the usual salutes.

¹⁶ The blue-winged butterfly of Kashmeer, the most rare and beautiful of the species.

¹⁷ Alluding to the dubious suicide of the scorpion, so placed for experiment by gentle philosophers. Some maintain that the position of the sting, when turned toward the head, is merely a convulsive movement; but others have actually brought in the verdict, "Felo de se." The scorpions are surely interested in a speedy decision of the question; as, if once fairly established as insect Catos, they will probably be allowed to live as long as they think proper, without being martyred for the sake of a hypothesis.

¹⁸ The cannon at sunset close the Rhamazan. See note 8.

¹⁹ The moon.

²⁰ The celebrated fabulous ruby of Sultan Giamschid, the embellisher of Istakhar; from its splendour, named Schebgerag, "The Torch of Night"; also, "The Cup of the Sun," etc. In the first edition, "Giamschid" was written as a word of three syllables; so D'Herbelot has it; but I am told Richardson reduces it to a dissyllable, and writes "Jam-schid." I have left in the text the orthography of the one with the pronunciation of the other.

²¹ Al-Sirat, the bridge of breadth less than the thread of a famished spider, over which the Mussulmans must skate into Paradise, to which it is the only entrance; but this is not the worst, the river beneath being hell itself, into which, as may be expected, the unskilful and tender-foot contrive to tumble with a "*facilis descensus Averni*," not very pleasing in prospect to the next passenger. There is a shorter cut downward to the Jews and Christians.

²² A vulgar error: the Koran allots at least a third of Paradise to well-behaved women; but by far the greater number of Mussulmen interpret the text their own way, and exclude their moieties from heaven. Being enemies to Platonics, they can not discern "any fitness of things" in the souls of the other sex, conceiving them to be superseded by the Houris.

²³ An Oriental simile, which may, perhaps, though fairly stolen, be deemed "*plus Arabe qu'en Arabie*."

²⁴ Hyacinthine, in Arabic "Sunbul"; as common a thought in the Eastern poets as it was among the Greeks.

²⁵ Bismillah—"In the name of God"; the commencement of all the chapters of the Koran but one, and of prayers and thanksgivings.

²⁶ A phenomenon not uncommon with an angry Mussulman. In 1809, the Capitan Pacha's whiskers at a diplomatic audience were no less lively with indignation than a tiger cat's, to the horror of all the dragomans; the portentous mustachios twisted, they stood erect of their own accord, and were expected every moment to change their colour, but at last condescended to subside, which, probably, saved more heads than they contained hairs.

²⁷ "Amaun," quarter, pardon.

²⁸ The "evil eye," a common superstition in the Levant, and of which the imaginary effects are yet very singular on those who conceive themselves affected.

²⁹ The flowered shawls generally worn by persons of rank.

³⁰ The calpac is the solid or centre part of the head-dress; the shawl is wound round it, and forms the turban.

³¹ The turban, pillar, and inscriptive verse decorate the tombs of the Osmanlies, whether in the cemetery or the wilderness. In the mountains you frequently pass similar mementos; and on inquiry you are informed that they record some victim of rebellion, plunder, or revenge.

³² "Allah Hu!" the concluding words of the Muezzin's call to prayer from the highest gallery on the exterior of the minaret. On a still evening, when the Muezzin has a fine voice, which is frequently the case, the effect is solemn and beautiful beyond all the bells in Christendom.

³³ The following is part of a battle song of the Turks: "I see—I see a dark-eyed girl of Paradise, and she waves a handkerchief, a kerchief of green; and cries aloud, 'Come, kiss me, for I love thee.'"

³⁴ Monkir and Nekir are the inquisitors of the dead, before whom the corpse undergoes a slight novitiate and preparatory training for damnation. If the answers are none of the clearest, he is hauled up with a scythe and thumped down with a red-hot mace till properly seasoned, with a variety of subsidiary probations. The office of these angels is no sinecure; there are but two, and the number of orthodox deceased being in a small proportion to the remainder, their hands are always full.

³⁵ Eblis, the Oriental Prince of Darkness.

³⁶ The Vampire superstition is still general in the Levant. Honest Tournefort tells a long story, which Mr. Southey, in his notes on "Thalaba," quotes, about these "Vroucolochas," as he calls them. The Romaic term is "Vardoulacha." I recollect a whole family being terrified by the scream of a child, which they imagined must proceed from such a visitation. The Greeks never mention the word without horror. I find that "Broucolokas" is an old legitimate Hellenic appellation—at least is so applied to Arsenius, who, according to the Greeks, was after his death animated by the devil. The moderns, however, use the word I mention.

³⁷ The freshness of the face, and the wetness of the lip with blood, are the never-failing signs of a Vampire. The stories told in Hungary and Greece of these foul feeders are singular, and some of them most incredibly attested.

³⁸ The pelican is, I believe, the bird so libelled, by the imputation of feeding her chickens with her blood.

³⁹ This superstition of a second-hearing (for I never met with down-right second-sight in the East) fell once under my own observation. On my third journey to Cape Colonna, early in 1811, as we passed through the defile that leads from the hamlet between Keratia and Colonna, I observed Dervish Tahiri riding rather out of the path, and leaning his head upon his hand, as if in pain. I rode up and inquired. "We are in peril," he answered.—"What peril? we are not now in Albania, nor in the passes to Ephesus, Messalunghi, or Lepanto; there are plenty of us, well armed, and the Choriates have not courage to be thieves."—"True, Affendi, but nevertheless the shot is ringing in my ears."—"The shot! not a tophaïke has been fired this morning."—"I hear it, notwithstanding—Bom—Bom—as plainly as I hear your voice."—"Psha!"—"As you please, Affendi; if it is written, so will it be."—I left this quick-eared predestinarian, and rode up to Basili, his Christian compatriot, whose ears, though not at all prophetic, by no means relished the intelligence. We all arrived at Colonna, remained some hours, and returned leisurely, saying a variety of brilliant things, in more languages than spoiled the building of Babel, upon the mistaken seer. Romaic, Arnaut, Turkish, Italian, and English were all exercised, in various conceits, upon the unfortunate Mussulman. While we were contemplating the beautiful pros-

pect, Dervish was occupied about the columns. I thought he was deranged into an antiquarian, and asked him if he had become a "Palacastro" man? "No," said he, "but these pillars will be useful in making a stand"; and added other remarks, which at least evinced his own belief in his troublesome faculty of fore-hearing. On our return to Athens we heard from Leoné (a prisoner set ashore some days after) of the intended attack of the Mainotes, mentioned, with the cause of its not taking place, in the notes to "Childe Harold," Canto II. I was at some pains to question the man, and he described the dresses, arms, and marks of the horses of our party so accurately, that, with other circumstances, we could not doubt of his being in "villainous company," and ourselves in a bad neighbourhood. Dervish became a soothsayer for life, and I dare say he is now hearing more musketry than ever will be fired, to the great refreshment of the Arnauts of Berat, and his native mountains. I shall mention one trait more of this singular race. In March, 1811, a remarkably stout and active Arnaut came (I believe the fiftieth on the same errand) to offer himself as an attendant, which was declined. "Well, Affendi," quoth he, "may you live!—you would have found me useful. I shall leave the town for the hills to-morrow; in the winter I return; perhaps you will then receive me." Dervish, who was present, remarked as a thing of course, and of no consequence, "In the meantime, he will join the Klephtes" (robbers), which was true to the letter. If not cut off, they come down in the winter, and pass it unmolested in some town, where they are often as well known as their exploits.

⁴⁰ The monk's sermon is omitted. It seems to have had so little effect upon the patient, that it could have no hopes from the reader. It may be sufficient to say, that it was of a customary length (as may be perceived from the interruptions and uneasiness of the penitent), and was delivered in the nasal tone of all orthodox preachers.

⁴¹ "Symar," shroud.

⁴² The circumstance to which the above story relates, was not very uncommon in Turkey. A few years ago, the wife of Mughtar Pacha complained to his father of his son's supposed infidelity; he asked with whom, and she had the barbarity to give in a list of the twelve handsomest women in Yanina. They were seized, fastened up in sacks, and drowned in the lake the same night! One of the guards who was present informed me, that not one of the victims uttered a cry, or showed a symptom of terror, at so sudden a "wrench from all we know, from all we love." The fate of Phrosine, the fairest of this sacrifice, is the subject of many a Romaic and Arnaut ditty. The story in the text is one told of a young Venetian many years ago, and now nearly forgotten. I heard it by accident recited by one of the coffee-house story-tellers who abound in the Levant, and sing or recite their narratives. The additions and interpolations by the translator will be easily distinguished from the rest, by the want of Eastern imagery; and I regret that my memory has retained so few fragments of the original. For the contents of some of the notes, I am indebted partly to D'Herbelot, and partly to that most Eastern, and, as Mr. Weber justly entitles it, "sublime tale," the "Caliph Vathek." I do not know from what source the author of that singular volume may have drawn his materials; some of his incidents are to be found in the "Bibliothèque Orientale"; but for correctness of costume, beauty of description, and power of imagination, it far surpasses all European imitations; and bears such marks of originality, that those who have visited the East will find some difficulty in believing it to be more than a translation. As an Eastern tale, even Rasselas must bow before it; his "Happy Valley" will not bear a comparison with the "Hall of Eblis."

THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS

A TURKISH TALE

“ Had we never loved so kindly,
Had we never loved so blindly,
Never met or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.”—BURNS.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD HOLLAND

THIS TALE IS INSCRIBED, WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF REGARD AND RESPECT,
BY HIS GRATEFULLY OBLIGED AND SINCERE FRIEND,
BYRON.

CANTO THE FIRST

I

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime,
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle,
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime?
Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine;
Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppressed with perfume,
Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gül in her bloom;
Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute;
Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the sky,
In colour though varied, in beauty may vie,
And the purple of Ocean is deepest in dye;
Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine?
'Tis the clime of the East; 'tis the land of the Sun—
Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done?
Oh! wild as the accents of lovers' farewell
Are the hearts which they bear, and the tales which they tell.

II

Begirt with many a gallant slave,
 Apparell'd as becomes the brave,
 Awaiting each his lord's behest
 To guide his steps, or guard his rest,
 Old Giaffir sate in his Divan :
 Deep thought was in his aged eye ;
 And though the face of Mussulman
 Not oft betrays to standers by
 The mind within, well skilled to hide
 All but unconquerable pride,
 His pensive cheek and pondering brow
 Did more than he was wont avow.

III

“ Let the chamber be cleared.”—The train disappeared—

“ Now call me the chief of the Haram guard.”

With Giaffir is none but his only son,

And the Nubian awaiting the sire's award.

“ Haroun—when all the crowd that wait
 Are passed beyond the outer gate,
 (Woe to the head whose eye beheld
 My child Zuleika's face unveiled !)
 Hence, lead my daughter from her tower ;
 Her fate is fixed this very hour :
 Yet not to her repeat my thought ;
 By me alone be duty taught ! ”

“ Pacha ! to hear is to obey.”

No more must slave to despot say—
 Then to the tower had taken his way,
 But here young Selim silence brake,

First lowly rendering reverence meet !

And downcast looked, and gently spake,

Still standing at the Pacha's feet :

For son of Moslem must expire,

Ere dare to sit before his sire !

“ Father ! for fear that thou shouldst chide

My sister, or her sable guide,

Know—for the fault, if fault there be,

Was mine—then fall thy frowns on me—

So lovelily the morning shone,

That—let the old and weary sleep—

I could not ; and to view alone

The fairest scenes of land and deep,

With none to listen and reply
To thoughts with which my heart beat high,
Were irksome—for whate'er my mood,
In sooth I love not solitude ;
I on Zuleika's slumber broke,
And, as thou knowest that for me
Soon turns the Haram's grating key,
Before the guardian slaves awoke
We to the cypress groves had flown,
And made earth, main, and heaven our own !
There lingered we, beguiled too long
With Mejnoun's tale, or Sadi's song,¹
Till I, who heard the deep tambour
Beat thy Divan's approaching hour,
To thee, and to my duty true,
Warned by the sound, to greet thee flew :
But there Zuleika wanders yet—
Nay, father, rage not—nor forget
That none can pierce that secret bower
But those who watch the women's tower."

IV

"Son of a slave"—the Pacha said—
"From unbelieving mother bred,
Vain were a father's hope to see
Aught that beseems a man in thee.
Thou, when thine arm should bend the bow,
And hurl the dart, and curb the steed,
Thou, Greek in soul if not in creed,
Must pore where babbling waters flow,
And watch unfolding roses blow.
Would that yon orb, whose matin glow
Thy listless eyes so much admire,
Would lend thee something of his fire !
Thou, who wouldst see this battlement
By Christian cannon piecemeal rent ;
Nay, tamely view old Stamboul's wall
Before the dogs of Moscow fall,
Nor strike one stroke for life and death
Against the curs of Nazareth !
Go—let thy less than woman's hand
Assume the distaff—not the brand.
But, Haroun!—to my daughter speed :
And hark—of thine own head take heed—
If thus Zuleika oft takes wing—
Thou see'st yon bow—it hath a string!"

V

No sound from Selim's lip was heard,
At least that met old Giaffir's ear,
But every frown and every word
Pierced keener than a Christian's sword.
"Son of a slave!—reproached with fear!
Those gibes had cost another dear.
Son of a slave!—and who my sire?"
Thus held his thoughts their dark career;
And glances even of more than ire
Flash forth, then faintly disappear.
Old Giaffir gazed upon his son
And started; just within his eye
He read how much his wrath had done;
He saw rebellion there begun:
"Come hither, boy—what, no reply?
I mark thee—and I know thee too;
But there be deeds thou dar'st not do:
But if thy beard had manlier length,
And if thy hand had skill and strength,
I'd joy to see thee break a lance,
Albeit against my own perchance."

As sneeringly these accents fell,
On Selim's eye he fiercely gazed:
That eye returned him glance for glance,
And proudly to his sire's was raised,
Till Giaffir's quailed and shrunk askance—
And why—he felt, but durst not tell.
"Much I misdoubt this wayward boy
Will one day work me more annoy:
I never loved him from his birth,
And—but his arm is little worth,
And scarcely in the chase could cope
With timid fawn or antelope,
Far less would venture into strife
Where man contends for fame and life—
I would not trust that look or tone:
No—nor the blood so near my own.
That blood—he hath not heard—no more—
I'll watch him closer than before.
He is an Arab to my sight,²
Or Christian crouching in the fight—
But hark!—I hear Zuleika's voice;
Like Houris' hymn it meets mine ear:
She is the offspring of my choice;
Oh! more than even her mother dear,

With all to hope, and naught to fear—
 My Peri!—ever welcome here!
 Sweet, as the desert fountain's wave,
 To lips just cooled in time to save—
 Such to my longing sight art thou;
 Nor can they waft to Mecca's shrine
 More thanks for life, than I for thine,
 Who blest thy birth, and bless thee now."

VI

Fair, as the first that fell of womankind,
 When on that dread yet lovely serpent smiling,
 Whose image then was stamped upon her mind—
 But once beguiled—and evermore beguiling;
 Dazzling, as that, oh! too transcendent vision
 To Sorrow's phantom-peopled slumber given,
 When heart meets heart again in dreams Elysian,
 And paints the lost on earth revived in heaven;
 Soft, as the memory of buried love;
 Pure, as the prayer which childhood wafts above;
 Was she—the daughter of that rude old chief,
 Who met the maid with tears—but not of grief.

Who hath not proved how feebly words essay
 To fix one spark of Beauty's heavenly ray?
 Who doth not feel, until his failing sight
 Faints into dimness with its own delight,
 His changing cheek, his sinking heart confess
 The might—the majesty of Loveliness?
 Such was Zulcika—such around her shone
 The nameless charms unmarked by her alone;
 The light of love, the purity of grace,
 The mind, the music breathing from her face,³
 The heart whose softness harmonized the whole—
 And, oh! that eye was in itself a soul!

Her graceful arms in meekness bending
 Across her gently-budding breast;
 At one kind word those arms extending
 To clasp the neck of him who blest
 His child caressing and carest,
 Zuleika came—and Giaffir felt
 His purpose half within him melt:
 Not that against her fancied weal
 His heart though stern could ever feel;
 Affection chained her to that heart;
 Ambition tore the links apart.

VII

"Zuleika ! child of gentleness !
 How dear this very day must tell,
 When I forget my own distress,
 In losing what I love so well,
 To bid thee with another dwell :
 Another ! and a braver man
 Was never seen in battle's van.
 We Moslem reck not much of blood ;
 But yet the line of Carasman⁴
 Unchanged, unchangeable, hath stood
 First of the bold Timariot bands
 That won and well can keep their lands.
 Enough that he who comes to woo
 Is kinsman of the Bey Oglou :
 His years need scarce a thought employ :
 I would not have thee wed a boy.
 And thou shalt have a noble dower :
 And his and my united power
 Will laugh to scorn the death-firman,
 Which others tremble but to scan,
 And teach the messenger what fate
 The bearer of such boon may wait.⁵
 And now thou know'st thy father's will ;
 All that thy sex hath need to know :
 'Twas mine to teach obedience still—
 The way to love, thy lord may show."

VIII

In silence bowed the virgin's head ;
 And if her eye was filled with tears
 That stifled feeling dare not shed,
 And changed her cheek from pale to red.
 And red to pale, as through her ears
 Those wingèd words like arrows sped,
 What could such be but maiden fears ?
 So bright the tear in Beauty's eye,
 Love half regrets to kiss it dry ;
 So sweet the blush of Bashfulness,
 Even Pity scarce can wish it less !

Whate'er it was the sire forgot ;
 Or if remembered, marked it not ;
 Thrice clapped his hands, and called his steed,⁶
 Resigned his gem-adorned chibouque,⁷
 And mounting featly for the mead,

With Maugrabee⁸ and Mamaluke,
 His way amid his Delis took,⁹
 To witness many an active deed
 With sabre keen, or blunt jerreed.
 The Kislar only and his Moors
 Watch well the Haram's massy doors.

IX

His head was leant upon his hand,
 His eye looked o'er the dark blue water
 That swiftly glides and gently swells
 Between the winding Dardanelles ;
 But yet he saw nor sea nor strand,
 Nor even his Pacha's turbaned band
 Mix in the game of mimic slaughter,
 Careering cleave the folded felt¹⁰
 With sabre stroke right sharply dealt ;
 Nor marked the javelin-darting crowd,
 Nor heard their Ollahs wild and loud—
 He thought but of old Giaffir's daughter !

X

No word from Selim's bosom broke ;
 One sigh Zuleika's thought bespoke :
 Still gazed he through the lattice grate,
 Pale, mute, and mournfully sedate.
 To him Zuleika's eye was turned,
 But little from his aspect learned ;
 Equal her grief, yet not the same :
 Her heart confessed a gentler flame :
 But yet that heart, alarmed or weak,
 She knew not why, forbade to speak.
 Yet speak she must—but when essay ?
 "How strange he thus should turn away !
 Not thus we e'er before have met ;
 Not thus shall be our parting yet."
 Thrice paced she slowly through the room,
 And watched his eye—it still was fixed :
 She snatched the urn wherein was mixed
 The Persian Atar-gúl's perfume,¹¹
 And sprinkled all its odours o'er
 The pictured roof and marble floor :¹²
 The drops, that through his glittering vest
 The playful girl's appeal addressed,
 Unheeded o'er his bosom flew,
 As if that breast were marble too.

"What, sullen yet? it must not be—
Oh! gentle Selim, this from thee!"
She saw in curious order set
The fairest flowers of Eastern land—
"He loved them once; may touch them yet
If offered by Zuleika's hand."
The childish thought was hardly breathed
Before the rose was plucked and wreathed;
The next fond moment saw her seat
Her fairy form at Selim's feet:
"This rose to calm my brother's cares
A message from the bulbul bears;¹³
It says to-night he will prolong
For Selim's ear his sweetest song;
And though his note is somewhat sad,
He'll try for once a strain more glad,
With some faint hope his altered lay
May sing these gloomy thoughts away.

XI

"What! not receive my foolish flower?
Nay then I am indeed unblest:
On me can thus thy forehead lower?
And know'st thou not who loves thee best?
Oh, Selim dear! oh, more than dearest!
Say, is it me thou hat'st or fearest?
Come, lay thy head upon my breast,
And I will kiss thee into rest,
Since words of mine, and songs must fail
E'en from my fabled nightingale.
I knew our sire at times was stern,
But this from thee had yet to learn:
Too well I know he loves thee not;
But is Zuleika's love forgot?
Ah! deem I right? the Pacha's plan—
This kinsman Bey of Carasman
Perhaps may prove some foe of thine:
If so, I swear by Mecca's shrine,
If shrines that ne'er approach allow
To woman's step admit her vow,
Without thy free consent, command,
The Sultan should not have my hand!
Think'st thou that I could bear to part
With thee, and learn to halve my heart?
Ah! were I severed from thy side,
Where were thy friend—and who my guide?

Years have not seen, Time shall not see
 The hour that tears my soul from thee:
 Even Azrael,¹⁴ from his deadly quiver
 When flies that shaft, and fly it must,
 That parts all else, shall doom forever
 Our hearts to undivided dust!"

XII

He lived—he breathed—he moved—he felt;
 He raised the maid from where she knelt;
 His trance was gone—his keen eyes shone
 With thoughts that long in darkness dwelt;
 With thoughts that burn—in rays that melt.
 As the stream late concealed
 By the fringe of its willows,
 When it rushes revealed
 In the light of its billows;
 As the bolt bursts on high
 From the black cloud that bound it,
 Flashed the soul of that eye
 Through the long lashes round it.
 A war-horse at the trumpet's sound,
 A lion roused by heedless hound,
 A tyrant waked to sudden strife
 By graze of ill-directed knife,
 Starts not to more convulsive life
 Than he, who heard that vow, displayed,
 And all, before repressed, betrayed:

"Now thou art mine, forever mine,
 With life to keep, and scarce with life resign:
 Now thou art mine, that sacred oath,
 Though sworn by one, hath bound us both.
 Yes, fondly, wisely hast thou done;
 That vow hath saved more heads than one:
 But blench not thou—thy simplest tress
 Claims more from me than tenderness;
 I would not wrong the slenderest hair
 That clusters round thy forehead fair,
 For all the treasures buried far
 Within the caves of Istakar.
 This morning clouds upon me lowered,
 Reproaches on my head were showered,
 And Giaffir almost called me coward!
 Now I have motive to be brave;
 The son of his neglected slave—
 Nay, start not, 'twas the term he gave—

May show, though little apt to vaunt,
 A heart his words nor deeds can daunt.
 His son, indeed!—yet, thanks to thee,
 Perchance I am, at least shall be!
 But let our plighted secret vow
 Be only known to us as now.
 I know the wretch who dares demand
 From Giaffir thy reluctant hand;
 More ill-got wealth, a meaner soul
 Holds not a Musselim's control:
 Was he not bred in Egripo?¹⁶
 A viler race let Israel show!
 But let that pass—to none be told
 Our oath; the rest let time unfold.
 To me and mine leave Osman Bey;
 I've partisans for peril's day:
 Think not I am what I appear;
 I've arms, and friends, and vengeance near.”

XIII

“Think not thou art what thou appearest!
 My Selim, thou art sadly changed:
 This morn I saw thee gentlest, dearest;
 But now thou'rt from thyself estranged.
 My love thou surely knew'st before,
 It ne'er was less, nor can be more.
 To see thee, hear thee, near thee stay,
 And hate the night, I know not why,
 Save that we meet not but by day;
 With thee to live, with thee to die,
 I dare not to my hope deny:
 Thy cheek, thine eyes, thy lips to kiss,
 Like this—and this—no more than this;
 For, Allah! sure thy lips are flame:
 What fever in thy veins is flushing?
 My own have nearly caught the same,
 At least I feel my cheek too blushing.
 To soothe thy sickness, watch thy health,
 Partake, but never waste thy wealth,
 Or stand with smiles unmurmuring by,
 And lighten half thy poverty;
 Do all but close thy dying eye,
 For that I could not live to try;
 To these alone my thoughts aspire:
 More can I do? or thou require?
 But, Selim, thou must answer why
 We need so much of mystery?”

The cause I can not dream nor tell,
But be it, since thou say'st 'tis well;
Yet what thou mean'st by 'arms' and 'friends,'
Beyond my weaker sense extends.
I meant that Giaffir should have heard
The very vow I plighted thee;
His wrath would not revoke my word:
But surely he would leave me free.
Can this fond wish seem strange in me,
To be what I have ever been?
What other hath Zuleika seen
From simple childhood's earliest hour?
What other can she seek to see
Than thee, companion of her bower,
The partner of her infancy?
These cherished thoughts with life begun,
Say, why must I no more avow?
What change is wrought to make me shun
The truth; my pride, and thine till now?
To meet the gaze of stranger's eyes
Our law, our creed, our God denies;
Nor shall one wandering thought of mine
At such, our Prophet's will, repine:
No! happier made by that decree!
He left me all in leaving thee.
Deep were my anguish, thus compelled
To wed with one I ne'er beheld:
This wherefore should I not reveal?
Why wilt thou urge me to conceal!
I know the Pacha's haughty mood
To thee hath never boded good:
And he so often storms at naught.
Allah! forbid that e'er he ought!
And why I know not, but within
My heart concealment weighs like sin.
If then such secrecy be crime,
And such it feels while lurking here,
Oh, Selim! tell me yet in time,
Nor leave me thus to thoughts of fear.
Ah! yonder see the Tchocadar,
My father leaves the mimic war:
I tremble now to meet his eye—
Say, Selim, canst thou tell me why?"

XIV

"Zuleika—to thy tower's retreat
Betake thee—Giaffir I can greet:

And now with him I fain must prate
 Of firmans, imposts, levies, state.
 There's fearful news from Danube's banks,
 Our Vizier nobly thins his ranks,
 For which the Giaour may give him thanks!
 Our Sultan hath a shorter way
 Such costly triumph to repay.
 But, mark me, when the twilight drum
 Hath warned the troops to food and sleep,
 Unto thy cell will Selim come:
 Then softly from the Haram creep
 Where we may wander by the deep:
 Our garden-battlements are steep;
 Nor these will rash intruder climb
 To list our words, or stint our time;
 And if he doth, I want not steel
 Which some have felt, and more may feel.
 Then shalt thou learn of Selim more
 Than thou hast heard or thought before:
 Trust me, Zuleika—fear not me!
 Thou know'st I hold a Haram key."

"Fear thee, my Selim! ne'er till now
 Did word like this—"

"Delay not thou;
 I keep the key—and Haroun's guard
 Have some, and hope of more reward.
 To-night, Zuleika, thou shalt hear
 My tale, my purpose, and my fear:
 I am not, love! what I appear."

CANTO THE SECOND

I

THE winds are high on Helle's wave,
 As on that night of stormy water,
 When Love, who sent, forgot to save
 The young, the beautiful, the brave,
 The lonely hope of Sestos' daughter.
 Oh! when alone along the sky
 Her turret-torch was blazing high,
 Though rising gale, and breaking foam,
 And shrieking sea-birds warned him home;

And clouds aloft and tides below,
With signs and sounds, forbade to go,
He could not see, he would not hear,
Or sound or sign foreboding fear;
His eye but saw the light of love,
The only star it hailed above;
His ear but rang with Hero's song,
"Ye waves, divide not lovers long!"—
That tale is old, but love anew
May nerve young hearts to prove as true.

II

The winds are high, and Helle's tide
Rolls darkly heaving to the main;
And Night's descending shadows hide
That field with blood bedewed in vain,
The desert of old Priam's pride;
The tombs, sole relics of his reign,
All—save immortal dreams that could beguile
The blind old man of Scio's rocky isle!

III

Oh! yet—for there my steps have been!
These feet have pressed the sacred shore,
These limbs that buoyant wave hath borne—
Minstrel! with thee to muse, to mourn,
To trace again those fields of yore,
Believing every hillock green
Contains no fabled hero's ashes,
And that around the undoubted scene
Thine own "broad Hellespont" still dashes,¹⁶
Be long my lot! and cold were he
Who there could gaze denying thee!

IV

The night hath closed on Helle's stream,
Nor yet hath risen on Ida's hill
That moon, which shone on his high theme:
No warrior chides her peaceful beam,
But conscious shepherds bless it still.
Their flocks are grazing on the mound
Of him who felt the Dardan's arrow;
That mighty heap of gathered ground
Which Ammon's son ran proudly round,¹⁷
By nations raised, by monarchs crowned,
Is now a lone and nameless barrow!
Within—thy dwelling-place how narrow?

Without—can only strangers breathe
 The name of him that was beneath :
 Dust long outlasts the storied stone ;
 But thou—thy very dust is gone !

V

Late, late to-night will Dian cheer
 The swain, and chase the boatman's fear ;
 Till then—no beacon on the cliff
 May shape the course of struggling skiff ;
 The scattered lights that skirt the bay,
 All, one by one, have died away ;
 The only lamp of this lone hour
 Is glimmering in Zuleika's tower.

Yes ! there is light in that lone chamber,
 And o'er her silken Ottoman
 Are thrown the fragrant beads of amber,
 O'er which her fairy fingers ran ;¹⁸
 Near these, with emerald rays beset,
 (How could she thus that gem forget ?)
 Her mother's sainted amulet,¹⁹
 Whereon engraved the Koorsee text,
 Could smoothe this life, and win the next ;
 And by her Comboloio lies²⁰
 A Koran of illumined dyes ;
 And many a bright emblazoned rhyme
 By Persian scribes redeemed from time ;
 And o'er those scrolls, not oft so mute,
 Reclines her now neglected lute ;
 And round her lamp of fretted gold
 Bloom flowers in urns of China's mould ;
 The richest work of Iran's loom,
 And Sheeraz' tribute of perfume ;
 All that can eye or sense delight
 Are gathered in that gorgeous room :
 But yet it hath an air of gloom.
 She, of this Peri cell the sprite,
 What doth she hence, and on so rude a night ?

VI

Wrapped in the darkest sable vest,
 Which none save noblest Moslem wear,
 To guard from winds of heaven the breast
 As heaven itself to Selim dear,
 With cautious steps the thicket threading,

And starting oft, as through the glade
The gust its hollow moanings made;
Till on the smother pathway treading,
More free her timid bosom beat,
The maid pursued her silent guide;
And though her terror urged retreat,
How could she quit her Selim's side?
How teach her tender lips to chide?

VII

They reached at length a grotto, hewn
By nature, but enlarged by art,
Where oft her lute she wont to tune,
And oft her Koran conned apart:
And oft in youthful reverie
She dreamed what Paradise might be;
Where woman's parted soul shall go
Her Prophet had disdained to show;
But Selim's mansion was secure,
Nor deemed she, could he long endure
His bower in other worlds of bliss,
Without her, most beloved in this!
Oh! who so dear with him could dwell?
What Houri soothe him half so well?

VIII

Since last she visited the spot
Some change seemed wrought within the grot;
It might be only that the night
Disguised things seen by better light:
That brazen lamp but dimly threw
A ray of no celestial hue:
But in a nook within the cell
Her eye on stranger objects fell.
There arms were piled, not such as wield
The turbaned Delis in the field;
But brands of foreign blade and hilt,
And one was red—perchance with guilt!
Ah! how without can blood be spilt?
A cup too on the board was set
That did not seem to hold sherbet.
What may this mean? she turned to see
Her Selim—"Oh! can this be he?"

IX

His robe of pride was thrown aside,
His brow no high-crowned turban bore,

But in its stead a shawl of red,
 Wreathed lightly round, his temples wore :
 That dagger, on whose hilt the gem
 Were worthy of a diadem,
 No longer glittered at his waist,
 Where pistols unadorned were braced ;
 And from his belt a sabre swung,
 And from his shoulder loosely hung
 The cloak of white, the thin capote
 That decks the wandering Candiote :
 Beneath—his golden plated vest
 Clung like a cuirass to his breast ;
 The greaves below his knee that wound
 With silvery scales were sheathed and bound.
 But were it not that high command
 Spake in his eye, and tone, and hand,
 All that a careless eye could see
 In him was some young Galiongée.²¹

X

“I said I was not what I seemed ;
 And now thou see'st my words were true :
 I have a tale thou hast not dreamed,
 If sooth—its truth must others rue.
 My story now 'twere vain to hide,
 I must not see thee Osman's bride :
 But had not thine own lips declared
 How much of that young heart I shared,
 I could not, must not, yet have shown
 The darker secret of my own.
 In this I speak not now of love ;
 That, let time, truth, and peril prove :
 But first—oh ! never wed another—
 Zuleika ! I am not thy brother !”

XI

“Oh ! not my brother !—yet unsay—
 God ! am I left alone on earth
 To mourn—I dare not curse—the day
 That saw my solitary birth ?
 Oh ! thou wilt love me now no more !
 My sinking heart foreboded ill ;
 But know me all I was before,
 Thy sister—friend—Zuleika still.
 Thou ledd'st me here perchance to kill ;
 If thou hast cause for vengeance, see
 My breast is offered—take thy fill !

Far better with the dead to be
Than live thus nothing now to thee;
Perhaps far worse, for now I know
Why Giaffir always seemed thy foe;
And I, alas! am Giaffir's child,
For whom thou wert contemned, reviled.
If not thy sister—wouldst thou save
My life, oh! bid me be thy slave!"

XII

"My slave, Zuleika!—nay, I'm thine:
But, gentle love, this transport calm,
Thy lot shall yet be linked with mine;
I swear it by our Prophet's shrine,
And be that thought thy sorrow's balm.
So may the Koran verse displayed²²
Upon its steel direct my blade,
In danger's hour to guard us both,
As I preserve that awful oath!
The name in which thy heart hath prided
Must change; but, my Zuleika, know,
That tie is widened, not divided,
Although thy sire's my deadliest foe.
My father was to Giaffir all
That Selim late was deemed to thee;
That brother wrought a brother's fall,
But spared, at least, my infancy;
And lulled me with a vain deceit
That yet a like return may meet.
He reared me, not with tender help,
But like the nephew of a Cain;²³
He watched me like a lion's whelp,
That gnaws and yet may break his chain.
My father's blood in every vein
Is boiling; but for thy dear sake
No present vengeance will I take;
Though here I must no more remain.
But first, beloved Zuleika! hear
How Giaffir wrought this deed of fear.

XIII

"How first their strife to rancour grew,
If love or envy made them foes,
It matters little if I knew;
In fiery spirits, slights, though few
And thoughtless, will disturb repose.
In war Abdallah's arm was strong,

Remembered yet in Bosniac song,
And Paswan's rebel hordes attest ²⁴
How little love they bore such guest :
His death is all I need relate,
The stern effect of Giaffir's hate ;
And how my birth disclosed to me,
Whate'er beside it makes, hath made me free.

XIV

" When Paswan, after years of strife,
At last for power, but first for life,
In Widdin's walls too proudly sate,
Our Pachas rallied round the state ;
Nor last nor least in high command,
Each brother led a separate band ;
They gave their horse-tails to the wind, ²⁵
And mustering in Sophia's plain
Their tents were pitched, their posts assigned ;
To one, alas ! assigned in vain !
What need of words ? the deadly bowl,
By Giaffir's order drugged and given,
With venom subtle as his soul,
Dismissed Abdallah's hence to heaven.
Reclined and feverish in the bath,
He, when the hunter's sport was up,
But little deemed a brother's wrath
To quench his thirst had such a cup :
The bowl a bribed attendant bore ;
He drank one draught, nor needed more ! ²⁶
If thou my tale, Zuleika, doubt,
Call Haroun—he can tell it out.

XV

" The deed once done, and Paswan's feud
In part suppressed, though ne'er subdued,
Abdallah's Pachalic was gained :—
Thou know'st not what in our Divan
Can wealth procure for worse than man—
Abdallah's honours were obtained
By him a brother's murder stained ;
'Tis true, the purchase nearly drained
His ill-got treasure, soon replaced.
Wouldst question whence ? Survey the waste,
And ask the squalid peasant how
His gains repay his broiling brow !—
Why me the stern usurper spared,
Why thus with me his palace shared,

I know not. Shame, regret, remorse,
And little fear from infant's force;
Besides, adoption as a son
By him whom Heaven accorded none,
Or some unknown cabal, caprice,
Preserved me thus; but not in peace:
He can not curb his haughty mood,
Nor I forgive a father's blood!

XVI

"Within thy father's house are foes;
Not all who break his bread are true:
To these should I my birth disclose,
His days, his very hours, were few:
They only want a heart to lead,
A hand to point them to the deed.
But Haroun only knows—or knew—
This tale, whose close is almost nigh:
He in Abdallah's palace grew,
And held that post in his Serai
Which holds he here—he saw him die:
But what could single slavery do?
Avenge his lord? alas! too late;
Or save his son from such a fate?
He chose the last, and when elate
With foes subdued, or friends betrayed,
Proud Giaffir in high triumph sate,
He led me helpless to his gate,
And not in vain it seems essayed
To save the life for which he prayed.
The knowledge of my birth secured
From all and each, but most from me;
Thus Giaffir's safety was insured.
Removed he too from Roumelie
To this our Asiatic side,
Far from our seats by Danube's tide,
With none but Haroun, who retains
Such knowledge—and that Nubian feels
A tyrant's secrets are but chains,
From which the captive gladly steals,
And this and more to me reveals:
Such still to guilt just Allah sends—
Slaves, tools, accomplices—no friends!

XVII

"All this, Zuleika, harshly sounds;
But harsher still my tale must be:

Howe'er my tongue thy softness wounds,
Yet I must prove all truth to thee.
I saw thee start this garb to see,
Yet is it one I oft have worn,
And long must wear: this Galiongée,
To whom thy plighted vow is sworn,
Is leader of those pirate hordes,
Whose laws and lives are on their swords;
To hear whose desolating tale
Would make thy waning cheek more pale:
Those arms thou see'st my band have brought,
The hands that wield are not remote;
This cup too for the rugged knaves
Is filled—once quaffed, they ne'er repine:
Our Prophet might forgive the slaves;
They're only infidels in wine!

XVIII

“What could I be? Proscribed at home,
And taunted to a wish to roam;
And listless left—for Giaffir's fear
Denied the courser and the spear—
Though oft—O Mohammed! how oft!—
In full Divan the despot scoffed,
As if my weak unwilling hand
Refused the bridle or the brand:
He ever went to war alone,
And pent me here untried—unknown;
To Haroun's care with women left,
By hope unblest, of fame bereft.
While thou—whose softness long endeared,
Though it unmanned me, still had cheered—
To Brusa's walls for safety sent,
Awaited'st there the field's event.
Haroun, who saw my spirit pining
Beneath inaction's sluggish yoke,
His captive, though with dread, resigning,
My thralldom for a season broke,
On promise to return before
The day when Giaffir's charge was o'er.
'Tis vain—my tongue can not impart
My almost drunkenness of heart,
When first this liberated eye
Surveyed earth, ocean, sun, and sky,
As if my spirit pierced them through,
And all their inmost wonders knew!
One word alone can paint to thee

That more than feeling—I was free!
Even for thy presence ceased to pine;
The world—nay—Heaven itself was mine!

XIX

“The shallop of a trusty Moor
Conveyed me from this idle shore;
I longed to see the isles that gem
Old Ocean’s purple diadem:
I sought by turns, and saw them all: ²⁷
But when and where I joined the crew,
With whom I’m pledged to rise or fall,
When all that we design to do
Is done, ’twill then be time more meet
To tell thee, when the tale’s complete.

XX

“’Tis true, they are a lawless brood,
But rough in form, nor mild in mood;
And every creed, and every race,
With them hath found—may find—a place:
But open speech, and ready hand,
Obedience to their chief’s command;
A soul for every enterprise,
That never sees with terror’s eyes;
Friendship for each, and faith to all,
And vengeance vowed for those who fall,
Have made them fitting instruments
For more than even my own intents.
And some—and I have studied all
Distinguished from the vulgar rank,
But chiefly to my council call
The wisdom of the cautious Frank—
And some to higher thoughts aspire,
The last of Lambro’s patriots there ²⁸
Anticipated freedom share;
And oft around the cavern fire
On visionary schemes debate,
To snatch the Rayahs from their fate. ²⁹
So let them ease their hearts with prate
Of equal rights, which man ne’er knew;
I have a love for freedom too.
Ay! let me like the ocean-Patriarch roam, ³⁰
Or only know on land the Tartar’s home! ³¹
My tent on shore, my galley on the sea,
Are more than cities and Serais to me:
Borne by my steed, or wafted by my sail,

Across the desert, or before the gale,
Bound where thou wilt, my barb! or glide, my prow;
But be the star that guides the wanderer, Thou!
Thou, my Zuleika! share and bless my bark;
The Dove of peace and promise to mine ark!
Or, since that hope denied in worlds of strife,
Be thou the rainbow to the storms of life!
The evening beam that smiles the cloud away,
And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray!
Blest—as the Muezzin's strain from Mecca's wall
To pilgrims pure and prostrate at his call;
Soft—as the melody of youthful days,
That steals the trembling tear of speechless praise;
Dear—as his native song to exile's ears,
Shall sound each tone thy long-loved voice endears.
For thee in those bright isles is built a bower
Blooming as Aden in its earliest hour.³²
A thousand swords, with Selim's heart and hand,
Wait—wave—defend—destroy—at thy command!
Girt by my band, Zuleika at my side,
The spoil of nations shall bedeck my bride.
The Haram's languid years of listless ease
Are well resigned for cares—for joys like these:
Not blind to fate, I see, where'er I rove,
Unnumbered perils—but one only love!
Yet well my toils shall that fond breast repay,
Though fortune frown or falser friends betray.
How dear the dream in darkest hours of ill,
Should all be changed, to find thee faithful still!
Be but thy soul, like Selim's, firmly shown;
To thee be Selim's tender as thine own;
To soothe each sorrow, share in each delight,
Blend every thought, do all—but disunite!
Once free, 'tis mine our horde again to guide;
Friends to each other, foes to aught beside:
Yet there we follow but the bent assigned
By fatal Nature to man's warring kind:
Mark! where his carnage and his conquests cease!
He makes a solitude, and calls it—peace!
I like the rest must use my skill or strength,
But ask no land beyond my sabre's length:
Power sways but by division—her resource
The blest alternative of fraud or force!
Ours be the last; in time deceit may come
When cities cage us in a social home:
There even thy soul might err—how oft the heart
Corruption shakes which peril could not part!

And woman, more than man, when death or woe,
Or even disgrace, would lay her lover low,
Sunk in the lap of luxury will shame—
Away suspicion!—not Zuleika's name!
But life is hazard at the best; and here
No more remains to win, and much to fear:
Yes, fear!—the doubt, the dread of losing thee,
By Osman's power, and Giaffir's stern decree.
That dread shall vanish with the favouring gale,
Which Love to-night hath promised to my sail:
No danger daunts the pair his smile hath blest,
Their steps still roving, but their hearts at rest.
With thee all toils are sweet, each clime hath charms;
Earth—sea alike—our world within our arms!
Ay—let the loud winds whistle o'er the deck,
So that those arms cling closer round my neck:
The deepest murmur of this lip shall be
No sigh for safety, but a prayer for thee!
The war of elements no fears impart
To love, whose deadliest bane is human art:
There lie the only rocks our course can check;
Here moments menace—there are years of wreck!
But hence ye thoughts that rise in Horror's shape!
This hour bestows, or ever bars escape.
Few words remain of mine my tale to close:
Of thine but one to waft us from our foes;
Yea—foes—to me will Giaffir's hate decline?
And is not Osman, who would part us, thine?

XXI

“His head and faith from doubt and death
Returned in time my guard to save;
Few heard, none told, that o'er the wave
From isle to isle I roved the while:
And since, though parted from my band
Too seldom now I leave the land,
No deed they've done, nor deed shall do,
Ere I have heard and doomed it too:
I form the plan, decree the spoil,
'Tis fit I oftener share the toil.
But now too long I've held thine ear;
Time presses, floats my bark, and here
We leave behind but hate and fear.
To-morrow Osman with his train
Arrives—to-night must break thy chain:
And wouldst thou save that haughty Bey,
Perchance, his life who gave thee thine,

With me this hour away—away!
 But yet, though thou art plighted mine,
 Wouldst thou recall thy willing vow,
 Appalled by truth imparted now,
 Here rest I—not to see thee wed:
 But be that peril on my head!"

XXII

Zuleika, mute and motionless,
 Stood like that statue of distress,
 When, her last hope forever gone,
 The mother hardened into stone;
 All in the maid that eye could see
 Was but a younger Niobè.
 But ere her lip, or even her eye,
 Essayed to speak, or look reply,
 Beneath the garden's wicket porch
 Far flashed on high a blazing torch!
 Another—and another—and another—
 "Oh!—no more—yet now my more than brother!"
 Far, wide, through every thicket spread,
 The fearful lights are gleaming red;
 Nor these alone—for each right hand
 Is ready with a sheathless brand.
 They part, pursue, return, and wheel
 With searching flambeau, shining steel;
 And last of all, his sabre waving,
 Stern Giaffir in his fury raving:
 And now almost they touch the cave—
 Oh! must that grot be Selim's grave?

XXIII

Dauntless he stood—" 'Tis come—soon past—
 One kiss, Zuleika—'tis my last:
 But yet my band not far from shore
 May hear this signal, see the flash;
 Yet now too few—the attempt were rash:
 No matter—yet one effort more."
 Forth to the cavern mouth he stept;
 His pistol's echo rang on high,
 Zuleika started not nor wept,
 Despair benumbed her breast and eye!—
 "They hear me not, or if they ply
 Their oars, 'tis but to see me die;
 That sound hath drawn my foes more nigh.
 Then forth my father's scimitar,
 Thou ne'er hast seen less equal war!

Farewell, Zuleika!—Sweet! retire :
Yet stay within—here linger safe,
At thee his rage will only chafe.
Stir not—lest even to thee perchance
Some erring blade or ball should glance.

Fear'st thou for him?—may I expire
If in this strife I seek thy sire!
No—though by him that poison poured :
No—though again he call me coward!
But tamely shall I meet their steel?
No—as each crest save his may feel!”

XXIV

One bound he made, and gained the sand :
Already at his feet hath sunk
The foremost of the prying band,
A gasping head, a quivering trunk :
Another falls—but round him close
A swarming circle of his foes ;
From right to left his path he cleft,
And almost met the meeting wave :
His boat appears—not five oars' length—
His comrades strain with desperate strength—
Oh! are they yet in time to save?
His feet the foremost breakers lave ;
His band are plunging in the bay,
Their sabres glitter through the spray ;
Wet—wild—unwearied to the strand
They struggle—now they touch the land!
They come—'tis but to add to slaughter—
His heart's best blood is on the water!

XXV

Escaped from shot, unharmed by steel,
Or scarcely grazed its force to feel,
Had Selim won, betrayed, beset,
To where the strand and billows met :
There as his last step left the land,
And the last death-blow dealt his hand—
Ah! wherefore did he turn to look
For her his eye but sought in vain?
That pause, that fatal gaze he took,
Hath doomed his death, or fixed his chain.
Sad proof, in peril and in pain,
How late will lover's hope remain!
His back was to the dashing spray ;
Behind, but close, his comrades lay

When, at the instant, hissed the ball—
 "So may the foes of Giaffir fall!"
 Whose voice is heard? whose carbine rang?
 Whose bullet through the night-air sang,
 Too nearly, deadly aimed to err?
 'Tis thine—Abdallah's Murderer!
 The father slowly rued thy hate,
 The son hath found a quicker fate:
 Fast from his breast the blood is bubbling,
 The whiteness of the sea-foam troubling—
 If aught his lips essayed to groan,
 The rushing billows choked the tone!

XXVI

Morn slowly rolls the clouds away;
 Few trophies of the fight are there:
 The shouts that shook the midnight-bay
 Are silent; but some signs of fray
 That strand of strife may bear,
 And fragments of each shivered brand;
 Steps stamped; and dashed into the sand
 The print of many a struggling hand
 May there be marked; nor far remote
 A broken torch, an oarless boat;
 And tangled on the weeds that heap
 The beach where shelving to the deep
 There lies a white capote!
 'Tis rent in twain—one dark-red stain
 The wave yet ripples o'er in vain:
 But where is he who wore?
 Ye! who would o'er his relics weep,
 Go, seek them where the surges sweep
 Their burthen round Sigæum's steep,
 And cast on Lemnos' shore:
 The sea-birds shriek above the prey,
 O'er which their hungry beaks delay,
 As shaken on his restless pillow,
 His head heaves with the heaving billow;
 That hand, whose motion is not life,
 Yet feebly seems to menace strife,
 Flung by the tossing tide on high,
 Then levelled with the wave—
 What reck's it, though that corse shall lie
 Within a living grave?
 The bird that tears that prostrate form
 Hath only robbed the meaner worm:
 The only heart, the only eye

Had bled or wept to see him die,
Had seen those scattered limbs composed,
And mourned above his turban-stone,
That heart hath burst—that eye was closed—
Yea—closed before his own.

XXVII

By Helle's stream there is a voice of wail!
And woman's eye is wet—man's cheek is pale:
Zuleika! last of Giaffir's race,

Thy destined lord is come too late:
He sees not—ne'er shall see—thy face!

Can he not hear

The loud Wul-wulleh warn his distant ear? ³³

Thy handmaids weeping at the gate,

The Koran-chanters of the hymn of fate,

The silent slaves with folded arms that wait,
Sighs in the hall, and shrieks upon the gale,

Tell him thy tale!

Thou didst not view thy Selim fall!

That fearful moment when he left the cave

Thy heart grew chill:

He was thy hope—thy joy—thy love—thine all—
And that last thought on him thou couldst not save
Sufficed to kill;

Burst forth in one wild cry—and all was still.

Peace to thy broken heart, and virgin grave!

Ah! happy! but of life to lose the worst!

That grief—though deep—though fatal—was thy first!

Thrice happy! ne'er to feel nor fear the force

Of absence, shame, pride, hate, revenge, remorse!

And, oh! that pang where more than madness lies!

The worm that will not sleep—and never dies;

Thought of the gloomy day and ghastly night,

That dreads the darkness, and yet loathes the light,

That winds around, and tears the quivering heart!

Ah! wherefore not consume it—and depart!

Woe to thee, rash and unrelenting chief!

Vainly thou heap'st the dust upon thy head,

Vainly the sackcloth o'er thy limbs doth spread;

By that same hand Abdallah—Selim—bled.

Now let it tear thy beard in idle grief:

Thy pride of heart, thy bride for Osman's bed,

She, whom thy Sultan had but seen to wed,

Thy daughter's dead!

Hope of thine age, thy twilight's lonely beam,

The star hath set that shone on Helle's stream.

What quenched its ray?—the blood that thou hast shed!
 Hark! to the hurried question of Despair:
 “Where is my child?”—an Echo answers—“Where?”³⁴

XXVIII

Within the place of thousand tombs
 That shine beneath, while dark above
 The sad but living cypress glooms,
 And withers not, though branch and leaf
 Are stamped with an eternal grief,
 Like early unrequited love,
 One spot exists, which ever blooms,
 Even in that deadly grove—
 A single rose is shedding there
 Its lonely lustre, meek and pale:
 It looks as planted by Despair—
 So white—so faint—the slightest gale
 Might whirl the leaves on high;
 And yet, though storms and blight assail,
 And hands more rude than wintry sky
 May wring it from the stem—in vain—
 To-morrow sees it bloom again!
 The stalk some spirit gently rears,
 And waters with celestial tears;
 For well may maids of Helle deem
 That this can be no earthly flower,
 Which mocks the tempest’s withering hour,
 And buds unsheltered by a bower;
 Nor droops, though spring refuse her shower,
 Nor woos the summer beam:
 To it the livelong night there sings
 A bird unseen—but not remote:
 Invisible his airy wings,
 But soft as harp that Houri strings
 His long entrancing note!
 It were the Bulbul; but his throat,
 Though mournful, pours not such a strain:
 For they who listen can not leave
 The spot, but linger there and grieve,
 As if they loved in vain!
 And yet so sweet the tears they shed,
 ’Tis sorrow so unmixed with dread,
 They scarce can bear the morn to break
 That melancholy spell,
 And longer yet would weep and wake,
 He sings so wild and well!
 But when the day-blush bursts from high,

Expires that magic melody.
 And some have been who could believe,
 (So fondly youthful dreams deceive,
 Yet harsh be they that blame),
 That note so piercing and profound
 Will shape and syllable its sound
 Into Zuleika's name.³⁵
 'Tis from her cypress' summit heard,
 That melts in air the liquid word;
 'Tis from her lowly virgin earth
 That white rose takes its tender birth.
 There late was laid a marble stone;
 Eve saw it placed—the morrow gone!
 It was no mortal arm that bore
 That deep fixed pillar to the shore;
 For there, as Helle's legends tell,
 Next morn 'twas found where Selim fell;
 Lashed by the tumbling tide, whose wave
 Denied his bones a holier grave:
 And there by night, reclined, 'tis said,
 Is seen a ghastly turbaned head:
 And hence extended by the billow,
 'Tis named the "Pirate-phantom's pillow!"
 Where first it lay that mourning flower
 Hath flourished; flourisheth this hour,
 Alone and dewy, coldly pure and pale;
 As weeping Beauty's cheek at Sorrow's tale.

NOTES

¹ Mejnoun and Leila, the Romeo and Juliet of the East. Sadi, the moral poet of Persia.

² The Turks abhor the Arabs (who return the compliment a hundred-fold) even more than they hate the Christians.

³ This expression has met with objections. I will not refer to "Him who hath not Music in his soul," but merely request the reader to recollect, for ten seconds, the features of the woman whom he believes to be the most beautiful; and if he then does not comprehend fully what is expressed feebly in the above line, I shall be sorry for us both. After all, this is rather to be felt than described; still, I think there are some who will understand it, at least they would have done had they beheld the countenance whose speaking harmony suggested the idea; for this passage is not drawn from imagination but memory, that mirror which Affliction dashes to the earth, and looking down upon the fragments, only beholds the reflection multiplied!

⁴ Carasman Oglou, or Kara Osman Oglou, is the principal landholder in Turkey; he governs Magnesia. Those who, by a kind of feudal tenure, possess land on condition of service, are called Timariots; they serve as Spahis, according to the extent of territory, and bring a certain number into the field, generally cavalry.

⁵ When a Pacha is sufficiently strong to resist, the single messenger,

who is always the first bearer of the order for his death, is strangled instead, and sometimes five or six, one after the other, on the same errand, by command of the refractory patient; if, on the contrary, he is weak or loyal, he bows, kisses the Sultan's respectable signature, and is bowstrung with great complacency. In 1810, several of "these presents" were exhibited in the niche of the Seraglio gate; among others, the head of the Pacha of Bagdad, a brave young man, cut off by treachery, after a desperate resistance.

⁶ Clapping of the hands calls the servants. The Turks hate a superfluous expenditure of voice, and they have no bells.

⁷ "Chibouque," the Turkish pipe, of which the amber mouth-piece, and sometimes the ball which contains the leaf, is adorned with precious stones, if in possession of the wealthier orders.

⁸ "Maugrabee," Moorish mercenaries.

⁹ "Delis," bravoes who form the forlorn-hope of the cavalry, and always begin the action.

¹⁰ A twisted fold of felt is used for scimitar practice by the Turks, and few but Mussulman arms can cut through it at a single stroke: sometimes a tough turban is used for the same purpose. The jerreed is a game of blunt javelins, animated and graceful.

¹¹ "Atar'gûl," attar of roses. The Persian is the finest.

¹² The ceiling and wainscots, or rather walls, of the Mussulman apartments are generally painted, in great houses, with one eternal and highly-coloured view of Constantinople, wherein the principal feature is a noble contempt of perspective; below, arms, scimitars, etc., are in general fancifully and not inelegantly disposed.

¹³ It has been much doubted whether the notes of this "Lover of the rose" are sad or merry; and Mr. Fox's remarks on the subject have provoked some learned controversy as to the opinions of the ancients on the subject. I dare not venture a conjecture on the point, though a little inclined to the "errare mallet," etc., if Mr. Fox was mistaken.

¹⁴ "Azrael," the angel of death.

¹⁵ "Egripo"—the Negropont. According to the proverb, the Turks of Egripo, the Jews of Salonica, and the Greeks of Athens are the worst of their respective races.

¹⁶ The wrangling about this epithet, "the broad Hellespont," or the "boundless Hellespont," whether it means one or the other, or what it means at all, has been beyond all possibility of detail. I have even heard it disputed on the spot; and not foreseeing a speedy conclusion to the controversy, amused myself with swimming across it in the meantime, and probably may again, before the point is settled. Indeed, the question as to the truth of "the tale of Troy divine" still continues, much of it resting upon the talismanic word *ἄνεμος*: probably Homer had the same notion of distance that a coquette has of time, and when he talks of boundless, means half a mile; as the latter, by a like figure, when she says eternal attachment, simply specifies three weeks.

¹⁷ Before his Persian invasion, and crowned the altar with laurel, etc. He was afterward imitated by Caracalla in his race. It is believed that the last also poisoned a friend, named Festus, for the sake of new Patroclan games. I have seen the sheep feeding on the tombs of *Æsietes* and *Antilochus*: the first is in the centre of the plain.

¹⁸ When rubbed, the amber is susceptible of a perfume, which is slight but not disagreeable.

¹⁹ The belief in amulets engraved on gems, or inclosed in gold boxes, containing scraps from the Koran, worn round the neck, wrist, or arm, is still universal in the East. The Koorsee (throne) verse in the second chapter of the Koran describes the attributes of the Most High, and is en-

graved in this manner, and worn by the pious, as the most esteemed and sublime of all sentences.

²⁰ "Comboloio," a Turkish rosary. The manuscripts, particularly those of the Persians, are richly adorned and illuminated. The Greek females are kept in utter ignorance; but many of the Turkish girls are highly accomplished, though not actually qualified for a Christian coterie. Perhaps some of our own "blues" might not be the worse for bleaching.

²¹ "Galiongée," or Galiongi, a sailor, that is, a Turkish sailor; the Greeks navigate, the Turks work the guns. Their dress is picturesque; and I have seen the Capitan Pacha more than once wearing it as a kind of incog. Their legs, however, are generally naked. The buskins described in the text as sheathed behind with silver are those of an Arnaut robber, who was my host (he had quitted the profession) at his Pyrgo, near Gastouni in the Morea; they were plated in scales one over the other, like the back of an armadillo.

²² The characters on all Turkish scimitars contain sometimes the name of the place of their manufacture, but more generally a text from the Koran, in letters of gold. Among those in my possession is one with a blade of singular construction; it is very broad, and the edge notched into serpentine curves like the ripple of water, or the wavering of flame. I asked the Armenian who sold it what possible use such a figure could add: he said, in Italian, that he did not know; but the Mussulmans had an idea that those of this form gave a severer wound; and liked it because it was "piu feroce." I did not much admire the reason, but bought it for its peculiarity.

²³ It is to be observed, that every allusion to any thing or personage in the Old Testament, such as the Ark, or Cain, is equally the privilege of Mussulman and Jew: indeed, the former profess to be much better acquainted with the lives, true and fabulous, of the patriarchs, than is warranted by our own sacred writ; and not content with Adam, they have a biography of Pre-Adamites. Solomon is the monarch of all necromancy, and Moses a prophet inferior only to Christ and Mohammed. Zuleika is the Persian name of Potiphar's wife; and her amour with Joseph constitutes one of the finest poems in their language. It is, therefore, no violation of costume to put the names of Cain, or Noah, into the mouth of a Moslem.

²⁴ Paswan Oglou, the rebel of Widdin; who, for the last years of his life, set the whole power of the Porte at defiance.

²⁵ "Horse-tail," the standard of a Pacha.

²⁶ Giaffir, Pacha of Argyro Castro, or Scutari, I am not sure which, was actually taken off by the Albanian Ali, in the manner described in the text. Ali Pacha, while I was in the country, married the daughter of his victim, some years after the event had taken place at a bath in Sophia, or Adrianople. The poison was mixed in the cup of coffee, which is presented before the sherbet by the bath-keeper, after dressing.

²⁷ The Turkish notions of almost all islands are confined to the Archipelago, the sea alluded to.

²⁸ Lambro Canzani, a Greek, famous for his efforts in 1789-'90, for the independence of his country. Abandoned by the Russians, he became a pirate, and the Archipelago was the scene of his enterprises. He is said to be still alive at St. Petersburg. He and Riga are the two most celebrated of the Greek revolutionists.

²⁹ "Rayahs," all who pay the capitation tax, called the "Haratch."

³⁰ This first of voyages is one of the few with which the Mussulmans profess much acquaintance.

³¹ The wandering life of the Arabs, Tartars, and Turkomans, will be found well detailed in any book of Eastern travels. That it possesses a

charm peculiar to itself can not be denied. A young French renegado confessed to Chateaubriand that he never found himself alone, galloping in the desert, without a sensation approaching to rapture, which was indescribable.

³⁹ "Jannat al Aden," the perpetual abode, the Mussulman paradise.

³⁸ The death-song of the Turkish women. The "silent slaves" are the men, whose notions of decorum forbid complaint in public.

³⁴ "I came to the place of my birth, and cried, 'The friends of my youth, where are they?' and an Echo answered, 'Where are they?'"—From an Arabic manuscript.

³⁵ "And airy tongues that syllable men's names."—MILTON.

For a belief that the souls of the dead inhabit the form of birds, we need not travel to the East. Lord Lyttleton's ghost story, the belief of the Duchess of Kendal, that George I flew into her window in the shape of a raven (see Orford's "Reminiscences"), and many other instances, bring this superstition nearer home. The most singular was the whim of a Worcester lady, who, believing her daughter to exist in the shape of a singing bird, literally furnished her pew in the cathedral with cages full of the kind; and as she was rich, and a benefactress in beautifying the church, no objection was made to her harmless folly. For this anecdote, see Orford's "Letters."

THE CORSAIR

TO THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

MY DEAR MOORE : I dedicate to you the last production with which I shall trespass on public patience, and your indulgence, for some years ; and I own that I feel anxious to avail myself of this latest and only opportunity of adorning my pages with a name consecrated by unshaken public principle, and the most undoubted and various talents. While Ireland ranks you among the firmest of her patriots ; while you stand alone the first of her bards in her estimation, and Britain repeats and ratifies the decree, permit one whose only regret, since our first acquaintance, has been the years he had lost before it commenced, to add the humble but sincere suffrage of friendship to the voice of more than one nation. It will at least prove to you that I have neither forgotten the gratification derived from your society, nor abandoned the prospect of its renewal, whenever your leisure or inclination allows you to atone to your friends for too long an absence. It is said among those friends, I trust truly, that you are engaged in the composition of a poem whose scene will be laid in the East ; none can do those scenes so much justice. The wrongs of your own country, the magnificent and fiery spirit of her sons, the beauty and feeling of her daughters, may there be found ; and Collins, when he denominated his Oriental his Irish Eclogues, was not aware how true, at least, was a part of his parallel. Your imagination will create a warmer sun, and less clouded sky ; but wildness, tenderness, and originality, are part of your national claim of Oriental descent, to which you have already thus far proved your title more clearly than the most zealous of your country's antiquaries.

May I add a few words on a subject on which all men are supposed to be fluent, and none agreeable ?—Self. I have written much, and published more than enough to demand a longer silence than I now meditate ; but, for some years to come, it is my intention to tempt no further the award of “ gods, men, nor columns.” In the present composition I have attempted not the most difficult, but, perhaps, the best adapted measure to our language, the good old and now neglected heroic couplet. The stanza of Spenser is perhaps too slow and dignified for narrative ; though, I confess, it is the measure most after my own heart. Scott alone, of the present generation, has hitherto completely triumphed over the fatal facility of the octo-syllabic verse ; and this is not the least victory of his fertile and mighty genius. In blank verse, Milton, Thomson, and our dramatists, are the beacons that shine along the deep, but warn us from the rough and barren rock on which they are kindled. The heroic couplet is not the most popular measure, certainly ; but as I did not deviate into the other

from a wish to flatter what is called public opinion, I shall quit it without further apology, and take my chance once more with that versification in which I have hitherto published nothing but compositions whose former circulation is part of my present, and will be of my future regret.

With regard to my story, and stories in general, I should have been glad to have rendered my personages more perfect and amiable, if possible, inasmuch as I have been sometimes criticised, and considered no less responsible for their deeds and qualities than if all had been personal. Be it so. If I have deviated into the gloomy vanity of "drawing from self," the pictures are probably like, since they are unfavourable; and if not, those who know me are undeceived, and those who do not, I have little interest in undeceiving. I have no particular desire that any but my acquaintance should think the author better than the beings of his imagining; but I can not help a little surprise, and perhaps amusement, at some odd critical exceptions in the present instance, when I see several bards (far more deserving, I allow), in very reputable plight, and quite exempted from all participation in the faults of those heroes, who, nevertheless, might be found with little more morality than "The Giaour," and perhaps—but no—I must admit Childe Harold to be a very repulsive personage; and as to his identity, those who like it must give him whatever alias they please.

If, however, it were worth while to remove the impression, it might be of some service to me, that the man who is alike the delight of his readers and his friends, the poet of all circles, and the idol of his own, permits me here and elsewhere to subscribe myself, most truly and affectionately, his obedient servant,

BYRON.

January 2, 1814.

CANTO THE FIRST

"——— nessun maggior dolore,
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria, ——."—DANTE.

I

"O'ER the glad waters of the dark-blue sea,¹
Our thoughts as boundless, and our souls as free,
Far as the breeze can bear, the billows foam,
Survey our empire, and behold our home!
These are our realms, no limits to their sway—
Our flag the sceptre all who meet obey.
Ours the wild life in tumult still to range
From toil to rest, and joy in every change.
Oh, who can tell? not thou, luxurious slave!
Whose soul would sicken o'er the heaving wave;
Not thou, vain lord of wantonness and ease!
Whom slumber soothes not—pleasure can not please—
Oh, who can tell, save he whose heart hath tried,
And danced in triumph o'er the waters wide,

The exulting sense—the pulse's maddening play,
That thrills the wanderer of that trackless way?
That for itself can woo the approaching fight,
And turn what some deem danger to delight;
That seeks what cravens shun with more than zeal,
And where the feebler faint—can only feel—
Feel—to the rising bosom's inmost core,
Its hope awaken and its spirit soar?
No dread of death—if with us die our foes—
Save that it seems even duller than repose:
Come when it will—we snatch the life of life—
When lost—what reck's it—by disease or strife?
Let him who crawls enamoured of decay,
Cling to his couch, and sicken years away;
Heave his thick breath, and shake his palsied head;
Ours—the fresh turf, and not the feverish bed.
While gasp by gasp he falters forth his soul,
Ours with one pang—one bound—escapes control.
His corse may boast its urn and narrow cave,
And they who loathed his life may gild his grave;
Ours are the tears, though few, sincerely shed,
When Ocean shrouds and sepulchres our dead.
For us, even banquets fond regret supply
In the red cup that crowns our memory;
And the brief epitaph in danger's day,
When those who win at length divide the prey,
And cry, Remembrance saddening o'er each brow,
How had the brave who fell exulted now!"

II

Such were the notes that from the Pirate's isle,
Around the kindling watch-fire rang the while;
Such were the sounds that thrilled the rocks along,
And unto ears as rugged seemed a song!
In scattered groups upon the golden sand,
They game—carouse—converse—or whet the brand;
Select the arms—to each his blade assign,
And careless eye the blood that dims its shine;
Repair the boat, replace the helm or oar,
While others straggling muse along the shore;
For the wild bird the busy springes set,
Or spread beneath the sun the dripping net;
Gaze where some distant sail a speck supplies,
With all the thirsting eye of Enterprise;
Tell o'er the tales of many a night of toil,
And marvel where they next shall seize a spoil:
No matter where—their chief's allotment this;

Theirs, to believe no prey nor plan amiss.
But who that CHIEF? his name on every shore
Is famed and feared—they ask and know no more.
With these he mingles not but to command;
Few are his words, but keen his eye and hand.
Ne'er seasons he with mirth their jovial mess,
But they forgive his silence for success.
Ne'er for his lip the purpling cup they fill,
That goblet passes him untasted still—
And for his fare—the rudest of his crew
Would that, in turn, have passed untasted too;
Earth's coarsest bread, the garden's homeliest roots,
And scarce the summer luxury of fruits,
His short repast in humbleness supply
With all a hermit's board would scarce deny.
But while he shuns the grosser joys of sense,
His mind seems nourished by that abstinence.
“Steer to that shore!”—they sail. “Do this!”—’tis done!
“Now form and follow me!”—the spoil is won.
Thus prompt his accents and his actions still,
And all obey and few inquire his will;
To such, brief answer and contemptuous eye
Convey reproof, nor further deign reply.

III

“A sail!—a sail!”—a promised prize to Hope!
Her nation—flag—how speaks the telescope?
No prize, alas!—but yet a welcome sail:
The blood-red signal glitters in the gale.
Yes—she is ours—a home-returning bark—
Blow fair, thou breeze!—she anchors ere the dark.
Already doubled is the cape—our bay
Receives that prow which proudly spurns the spray.
How gloriously her gallant course she goes!
Her white wings flying—never from her foes—
She walks the waters like a thing of life,
And seems to dare the elements to strife.
Who would not brave the battle-fire—the wreck—
To move the monarch of her peopled deck?

IV

Hoarse o'er her side the rustling cable rings:
The sails are furled; and anchoring, round she swings;
And gathering loiterers on the land discern
Her boat descending from the latticed stern.
'Tis manned—the oars keep concert to the strand
Till grates her keel upon the shallow sand.

Hail to the welcome shout!—the friendly speech!
When hand grasps hand uniting on the beach;
The smile, the question, and the quick reply,
And the heart's promise of festivity!

V

The tidings spread, and gathering grows the crowd:
The hum of voices, and the laughter loud,
And woman's gentler anxious tone is heard—
Friends'—husbands'—lovers' names in each dear word;
"Oh! are they safe? we ask not of success—
But shall we see them? will their accents bless?
From where the battle roars—the billows chafe—
They doubtless boldly did—but who are safe?
Here let them haste to gladden and surprise,
And kiss the doubt from these delighted eyes!"

VI

"Where is our chief? for him we bear report—
And doubt that joy—which hails our coming—short;
Yet thus sincere—'tis cheering, though so brief;
But Juan! instant guide us to our chief:
Our greeting paid, we'll feast on our return,
And all shall hear what each may wish to learn."
Ascending slowly by the rock-hewn way,
To where his watch-tower beetles o'er the bay,
By bushy brake, and wild flowers blossoming,
And freshness breathing from each silver spring,
Whose scattered streams from granite basins burst,
Leap into life, and sparkling woo your thirst;
From crag to cliff they mount.—Near yonder cave,
What lonely straggler looks along the wave?
In pensive posture leaning on the brand,
Not oft a resting-staff to that red hand?
"'Tis he—'tis Conrad—here—as wont—alone;
On—Juan!—on—and make our purpose known.
The bark he views—and tell him we would greet
His ear with tidings he must quickly meet:
We dare not yet approach—thou know'st his mood,
When strange or uninvited steps intrude."

VII

Him Juan sought, and told of their intent;—
He spake not—but a sign expressed assent.
These Juan calls—they come—to their salute
He bends him slightly, but his lips are mute.
"These letters, Chief, are from the Greek—the spy,

Who still proclaims our spoil or peril nigh:
 Whate'er his tidings, we can well report
 Much that—"Peace, peace!"—he cuts their prating short.
 Wondering they turn, abashed, while each to each
 Conjecture whispers in his muttering speech:
 They watch his glance with many a stealing look,
 To gather how that eye the tidings took;
 But, this as if he guessed, with head aside,
 Perchance from some emotion, doubt, or pride,
 He read the scroll—"My tablets, Juan, hark—
 Where is Gonsalvo?"

"In the anchored bark."

"There let him stay—to him this order bear.
 Back to your duty—for my course prepare:
 Myself this enterprise to-night will share."
 "To-night, Lord Conrad?"

"Ay! at set of sun:

The breeze will freshen when the day is done.
 My corslet—cloak—one hour—and we are gone.
 Sling on thy bugle—see that free from rust
 My carbine-lock springs worthy of my trust;
 Be the edge sharpened of my boarding-brand,
 And give its guard more room to fit my hand.
 This let the Armourer with speed dispose;
 Last time it more fatigued my arm than foes:
 Mark that the signal-gun be duly fired,
 To tell us when the hour of stay's expired."

VIII

They make obeisance, and retire in haste,
 Too soon to seek again the watery waste:
 Yet they repine not—so that Conrad guides,
 And who dare question aught that he decides?
 That man of loneliness and mystery,
 Scarce seen to smile, and seldom heard to sigh;
 Whose name appals the fiercest of his crew,
 And tints each swarthy cheek with sallow hue;
 Still sways their souls with that commanding art
 That dazzles, leads, yet chills the vulgar heart.
 What is that spell, that thus his lawless train
 Confess and envy, yet oppose in vain?
 What should it be, that thus their faith can bind?
 The power of Thought—the magic of the Mind!
 Linked with success, assumed and kept with skill,
 That moulds another's weakness to its will;
 Wields with their hands, but, still to these unknown,
 Makes even their mightiest deeds appear his own.

Such hath it been—shall be—beneath the sun,
The many still must labour for the one !
’Tis Nature’s doom—but let the wretch who toils,
Accuse not, hate not him who wears the spoils.
Oh ! if he knew the weight of splendid chains,
How light the balance of his humbler pains !

IX

Unlike the heroes of each ancient race,
Demons in act, but gods at least in face,
In Conrad’s form seems little to admire,
Though his dark eyebrow shades a glance of fire :
Robust but not Herculean—to the sight
No giant frame sets forth his common height ;
Yet, in the whole, who paused to look again,
Saw more than marks the crowd of vulgar men ;
They gaze and marvel how—and still confess
That thus it is, but why they can not guess.
Sun-burnt his cheek, his forehead high and pale
The sable curls in wild profusion veil ;
And oft perforce his rising lip reveals
The haughtier thought it curbs, but scarce conceals.
Though smooth his voice, and calm his general mien,
Still seems there something he would not have seen ;
His features’ deepening lines and varying hue
At times attracted, yet perplexed the view,
As if within that murkiness of mind
Worked feelings fearful, and yet undefined ;
Such might it be—that none could truly tell—
Too close inquiry his stern glance would quell.
There breathe but few whose aspect might defy
The full encounter of his searching eye :
He had the skill, when Cunning’s gaze would seek
To probe his heart and watch his changing cheek,
At once the observer’s purpose to espy,
And on himself roll back his scrutiny,
Lest he to Conrad rather should betray
Some secret thought, than drag that chief’s to day.
There was a laughing devil in his sneer,
That raised emotions both of rage and fear ;
And where his frown of hatred darkly fell,
Hope withering fled—and Mercy sighed farewell !

X

Slight are the outward signs of evil thought,
Within—within—’twas there the spirit wrought !
Love shows all changes—Hate, Ambition, Guile,

Betray no further than the bitter smile;
The lip's least curl, the lightest paleness thrown
Along the governed aspect, speak alone
Of deeper passions! and to judge their mien,
He, who would see, must be himself unseen.
Then—with the hurried tread, the upward eye,
The clinched hand, the pause of agony,
That listens, starting, lest the step too near
Approach intrusive on that mood of fear:
Then—with each feature working from the heart,
With feelings loosed to strengthen—not depart:
That rise—convulse—contend—that freeze, or glow,
Flush in the cheek, or damp upon the brow;
Then—Stranger! if thou canst, and tremblest not,
Behold his soul—the rest that soothes his lot!
Mark—how that lone and blighted bosom sears
The scathing thought of execrated years!
Behold—but who hath seen, or e'er shall see,
Man as himself—the secret spirit free?

XI

Yet was not Conrad thus by Nature sent
To lead the guilty—guilt's worst instrument—
His soul was changed, before his deeds had driven
Him forth to war with man and forfeit heaven.
Warped by the world in Disappointment's school,
In words too wise, in conduct there a fool;
Too firm to yield, and far too proud to stoop,
Doomed by his very virtues for a dupe,
He cursed those virtues as the cause of ill,
And not the traitors who betrayed him still;
Nor deemed that gifts bestowed on better men
Had left him joy, and means to give again.
Feared—shunned—belied—ere youth had lost her force,
He hated man too much to feel remorse,
And thought the voice of wrath a sacred call,
To pay the injuries of some on all.
He knew himself a villain—but he deemed
The rest no better than the thing he seemed;
And scorned the best as hypocrites who hid
Those deeds the bolder spirit plainly did.
He knew himself detested, but he knew
The hearts that loathed him, crouched and dreaded too.
Lone, wild, and strange, he stood alike exempt
From all affection and from all contempt:
His name could sadden, and his acts surprise:
But they that feared him dared not to despise.

Man spurns the worm, but pauses ere he wake
 The slumbering venom of the folded snake:
 The first may turn—but not avenge the blow;
 The last expires—but leaves no living foe;
 Fast to the doomed offender's form it clings,
 And he may crush—not conquer—still it stings!

XII

None are all evil—quickenings round his heart,
 One softer feeling would not yet depart;
 Oft could he sneer at others, as beguiled
 By passions worthy of a fool or child;
 Yet 'gainst that passion vainly still he strove,
 And even in him it asks the name of Love!
 Yes, it was love—unchangeable—unchanged,
 Felt but for one from whom he never ranged;
 Though fairest captives daily met his eye,
 He shunned, nor sought, but coldly passed them by;
 Though many a beauty drooped in prisoned bower,
 None ever soothed his most unguarded hour.
 Yes—it was love—if thoughts of tenderness,
 Tried in temptation, strengthened by distress,
 Unmoved by absence, firm in every clime,
 And yet—oh more than all!—untired by time;
 Which nor defeated hope, nor baffled wile,
 Could render sullen were she near to smile,
 Nor rage could fire, nor sickness fret to vent
 On her one murmur of his discontent;
 Which still would meet with joy, with calmness part,
 Lest that his look of grief should reach her heart;
 Which naught removed, nor menaced to remove—
 If there be love in mortals—this was love!
 He was a villain—ay—reproaches shower
 On him—but not the passion, nor its power,
 Which only proved, all other virtues gone,
 Not guilt itself could quench this loveliest one!

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XIII

He paused a moment—till his hastening men
 Passed the first winding downward to the glen.
 "Strange tidings!—many a peril have I past,
 Nor know I why this next appears the last!
 Yet so my heart forebodes, but must not fear,
 Nor shall my followers find me falter here.
 'Tis rash to meet, but surer death to wait
 Till here they hunt us to undoubted fate;

And, if my plan but hold, and Fortune smile,
We'll furnish mourners for our funeral-pile.
Ay—let them slumber—peaceful be their dreams!
Morn ne'er awoke them with such brilliant beams
As kindle high to-night (but blow, thou breeze!)
To warm these slow avengers of the seas.
Now to Medora—Oh! my sinking heart,
Long may her own be lighter than thou art!
Yet was I brave—mean boast where all are brave!
Even insects sting for aught they seek to save.
This common courage which with brutes we share,
That owes its deadliest efforts to despair,
Small merit claims—but 'twas my nobler hope
To teach my few with numbers still to cope;
Long have I led them—not to vainly bleed:
No medium now—we perish or succeed!
So let it be—it irks not me to die;
But thus to urge them whence they can not fly.
My lot hath long had little of my care,
But chafes my pride thus baffled in the snare:
Is this my skill? my craft? to set at last
Hope, power, and life upon a single cast?
O Fate!—accuse thy folly, not thy fate—
She may redeem thee still—nor yet too late.”

XIV

Thus with himself communion held he, till
He reached the summit of his tower-crowned hill,
There at the portal paused—for wild and soft
He heard those accents never heard too oft;
Through the high lattice far yet sweet they rung,
And these the notes his bird of beauty sung:

“Deep in my soul that tender secret dwells,
Lonely and lost to light for evermore,
Save when to thine my heart responsive swells,
Then trembles into silence as before.

“There, in its centre, a sepulchral lamp
Burns the slow flame, eternal—but unseen;
Which not the darkness of despair can damp,
Though vain its ray as it had never been.

“Remember me—Oh! pass not thou my grave
Without one thought whose relics there recline:
The only pang my bosom dare not brave
Must be to find forgetfulness in thine.

“My fondest—faintest—latest accents hear :
Grief for the dead not Virtue can reprove ;
Then give me all I ever asked—a tear,
The first—last—sole reward of so much love !”

He passed the portal—crossed the corridor,
And reached the chamber as the strain gave o'er :
“My own Medora ! sure thy song is sad—”

“In Conrad's absence wouldst thou have it glad ?
Without thine ear to listen to my lay,
Still must my song my thoughts, my soul betray :
Still must each accent to my bosom suit,
My heart unhushed—although my lips were mute !
Oh ! many a night on this lone couch reclined,
My dreaming fear with storms hath winged the wind,
And deemed the breath that faintly fanned thy sail
The murmuring prelude of the ruder gale ;
Though soft, it seemed the low prophetic dirge,
That mourned thee floating on the savage surge :
Still would I rise to rouse the beacon fire,
Lest spies less true should let the blaze expire :
And many a restless hour outwatched each star,
And morning came—and still thou wert afar.
Oh ! how the chill blast on my bosom blew,
And day broke dreary on my troubled view,
And still I gazed and gazed—and not a prow
Was granted to my tears—my truth—my vow !
At length—'twas noon—I hailed and blest the mast
That met my sight—it neared—Alas ! it passed !
Another came—O God ! 'twas thine at last !
Would that those days were over ! wilt thou ne'er,
My Conrad ! learn the joys of peace to share ?
Sure thou hast more than wealth, and many a home
As bright as this invites us not to roam :
Thou know'st it is not peril that I fear,
I only tremble when thou art not here ;
Then not for mine, but that far dearer life,
Which flies from love and languishes for strife—
How strange that heart, to me so tender still,
Should war with Nature and its better will !”

“Yea, strange indeed—that heart hath long been changed ;
Worm-like 'twas trampled—adder-like avenged,
Without one hope on earth beyond thy love,
And scarce a glimpse of mercy from above.
Yet the same feeling which thou dost condemn,
My very love to thee is hate to them,

So closely mingled here, that disentwined,
I cease to love thee when I love mankind:
Yet dread not this—the proof of all the past
Assures the future that my love will last;
But—O Medora! nerve thy gentler heart,
This hour again—but not for long—we part.”

“This hour we part!—my heart foreboded this!
Thus ever fade my fairy dreams of bliss.
This hour—it can not be—this hour away!
Yon bark hath hardly anchored in the bay:
Her consort still is absent, and her crew
Have need of rest before they toil anew:
My love! thou mock'st my weakness; and wouldst steel
My breast before the time when it must feel;
But trifle now no more with my distress,
Such mirth hath less of play than bitterness.
Be silent, Conrad!—dearest! come and share
The feast these hands delighted to prepare;
Light toil! to cull and dress thy frugal fare!
See, I have plucked the fruit that promised best,
And where not sure, perplexed, but pleased, I guessed
At such as seemed the fairest: thrice the hill
My steps have wound to try the coolest rill;
Yes! thy sherbet to-night will sweetly flow,
See how it sparkles in its vase of snow!
The grapes' gay juice thy bosom never cheers;
Thou more than Moslem when the cup appears:
Think not I mean to chide—for I rejoice
What others deem a penance is thy choice.
But come, the board is spread; our silver lamp
Is trimmed, and heeds not the Sirocco's damp.
Then shall my handmaids while the time along,
And join with me the dance, or wake the song;
Or my guitar, which still thou lov'st to hear,
Shall soothe or lull—or should it vex thine ear,
We'll turn the tale, by Ariosto told,
Of fair Olympia loved and left of old.²
Why—thou wert worse than he who broke his vow
To that lost damsel, shouldst thou leave me now;
Or even that traitor chief—I've seen thee smile,
When the clear sky showed Ariadne's Isle,
Which I have pointed from these cliffs the while:
And thus, half sportive, half in fear, I said,
Lest Time should raise that doubt to more than dread,
Thus Conrad, too, will quit me for the main:
And he deceived me—for—he came again!”

“Again—again—and oft again—my love!
If there be life below, and hope above,
He will return—but now, the moments bring
The time of parting with redoubled wing:
The why—the where—what boots it now to tell?
Since all must end in that wild word—farewell!
Yet would I fain—did time allow—disclose—
Fear not—these are no formidable foes;
And here shall watch a more than wonted guard,
For sudden siege and long defence prepared:
Nor be thou lonely—though thy lord’s away,
Our matrons and thy handmaids with thee stay;
And this thy comfort—that when next we meet,
Security shall make repose more sweet.
List!—’tis the bugle”—Juan shrilly blew—
“One kiss—one more—another—Oh! Adieu!”

She rose—she sprang—she clung to his embrace,
Till his heart heaved beneath her hidden face.
He dared not raise to his that deep-blue eye,
Which downcast drooped in tearless agony.
Her long fair hair lay floating o’er his arms,
In all the wildness of dishevelled charms;
Scarce beat that bosom where his image dwelt
So full—that feeling seemed almost unfelt!
Hark—peals the thunder of the signal-gun!
It told ’twas sunset—and he cursed that sun.
Again—again—that form he madly pressed,
Which mutely clasped, imploringly caressed!
And tottering to the couch his bride he bore,
One moment gazed—as if to gaze no more;
Felt—that for him earth held but her alone,
Kissed her cold forehead—turned—is Conrad gone?

XV

“And is he gone?”—on sudden solitude
How oft that fearful question will intrude!
“’Twas but an instant past—and here he stood!
And now”—without the portal’s porch she rushed,
And then at length her tears in freedom gushed;
Big—bright—and fast, unknown to her they fell;
But still her lips refused to send—“Farewell!”
For in that word—that fatal word—howe’er
We promise—hope—believe—there breathes despair,
O’er every feature of that still, pale face,
Had sorrow fixed what time can ne’er erase:
The tender blue of that large loving eye

Grew frozen with its gaze on vacancy.
Till—oh, how far!—it caught a glimpse of him,
And then it flowed—and frenzied seemed to swim,
Through those long, dark, and glistening lashes dewed
With drops of sadness oft to be renewed.
“He’s gone!”—against her heart that hand is driven,
Convulsed and quick—then gently raised to heaven;
She looked and saw the heaving of the main;
The white sail set—she dared not look again;
But turned with sickening soul within the gate—
“It is no dream—and I am desolate!”

XVI

From crag to crag descending—swiftly sped
Stern Conrad down, nor once he turned his head;
But shrunk whene’er the windings of his way
Forced on his eye what he would not survey,
His lone, but lovely dwelling on the steep,
That hailed him first when homeward from the deep:
And she—the dim and melancholy star,
Whose ray of beauty reached him from afar,
On her he must not gaze, he must not think,
There he might rest—but on Destruction’s brink;
Yet once almost he stopped—and nearly gave
His fate to chance, his projects to the wave;
But no—it must not be—a worthy chief
May melt, but not betray to woman’s grief.
He sees his bark, he notes how fair the wind,
And sternly gathers all his might of mind:
Again he hurries on—and as he hears
The clang of tumult vibrate on his ears,
The busy sounds, the bustle of the shore,
The shout, the signal, and the dashing oar;
As marks his eye the seaboy on the mast,
The anchors rise, the sails unfurling fast,
The waving kerchiefs of the crowd that urge
That mute adieu to those who stem the surge;
And more than all, his blood-red flag aloft,
He marvelled how his heart could seem so soft.
Fire in his glance, and wildness in his breast,
He feels of all his former self possess;
He bounds—he flies—until his footsteps reach
The verge where ends the cliff, begins the beach,
There checks his speed; but pauses less to breathe
The breezy freshness of the deep beneath,
Than there his wonted statelier step renew;
Nor rush, disturbed by haste, to vulgar view:

For well had Conrad learned to curb the crowd,
 By arts that veil, and oft preserve the proud ;
 His was the lofty port, the distant mien,
 That seems to shun the sight—and awes if seen :
 The solemn aspect, and the high-born eye,
 That checks low mirth, but lacks not courtesy ;
 All these he wielded to command assent ;
 But where he wished to win, so well unbent,
 That kindness cancelled fear in those who heard,
 And others' gifts showed mean beside his word,
 When echoed to the heart as from his own
 His deep yet tender melody of tone :
 But such was foreign to his wonted mood,
 He cared not what he softened but subdued ;
 The evil passions of his youth had made
 Him value less who loved—than what obeyed.

XVII

Around him mustering ranged his ready guard.
 Before him Juan stands—"Are all prepared?"

"They are—nay, more—embarked : the latest boat
 Waits but my chief——"

"My sword, and my capote."

Soon firmly girded on and lightly slung,
 His belt and cloak were o'er his shoulders flung :
 "Call Pedro here!"—He comes—and Conrad bends,
 With all the courtesy he deigned his friends ;
 "Receive these tablets, and peruse with care,
 Words of high trust and truth are graven there ;
 Double the guard, and when Anselmo's bark
 Arrives, let him alike these orders mark :
 In three days (serve the breeze) the sun shall shine
 On our return—till then all peace be thine !"
 This said, his brother Pirate's hand he wrung,
 Then to his boat with haughty gesture sprung.
 Flashed the dipped oars, and sparkling with the stroke,
 Around the waves' phosphoric³ brightness broke ;
 They gain the vessel—on the deck he stands,
 Shrieks the shrill whistle—ply the busy hands—
 He marks how well the ship her helm obeys,
 How gallant all her crew—and deigns to praise.
 His eyes of pride to young Gonsalvo turn—
 Why doth he start, and inly seem to mourn ?
 Alas ! those eyes beheld his rocky tower,
 And live a moment o'er the parting hour ;
 She—his Medora—did she mark the prow ?

Ah! never loved he half so much as now!
But much must yet be done ere dawn of day—
Again he mans himself and turns away;
Down to the cabin with Gonsalvo bends,
And there unfolds his plan—his means—and ends;
Before them burns the lamp, and spreads the chart,
And all that speaks and aids the naval art;
They to the midnight watch protract debate;
To anxious eyes what hour is ever late?
Meantime, the steady breeze serenely blew,
And fast and falcon-like the vessel flew;
Passed the high headlands of each clustering isle,
To gain their port—long—long ere morning smile:
And soon the night-glass through the narrow bay
Discovers where the Pacha's galleys lay.
Count they each sail—and mark how there supine
The lights in vain o'er heedless Moslem shine.
Secure, unnoted, Conrad's prow passed by,
And anchored where his ambush meant to lie;
Screened from espial by the jutting cape,
That rears on high its rude fantastic shape.
Then rose his band to duty—not from sleep—
Equipped for deeds alike on land or deep;
While leaned their leader o'er the fretting flood,
And calmly talked—and yet he talked of blood!

CANTO THE SECOND

“Conosceste i dubiosi desiri?”—DANTE.

I

IN Coron's bay floats many a galley light,
Through Coron's lattices the lamps are bright,
For Seyd, the Pacha, makes a feast to-night:
A feast for promised triumph yet to come,
When he shall drag the fettered Rovers home;
This hath he sworn by Alla and his sword,
And faithful to his firman and his word,
His summoned prowls collect along the coast,
And great the gathering crews, and loud the boast;
Already shared the captives and the prize,
Though far the distant foe they thus despise;
'Tis but to sail—no doubt to-morrow's sun

Will see the Pirates bound—their haven won !
Meantime the watch may slumber, if they will,
Nor only wake to war, but dreaming kill.
Though all, who can, disperse on shore and seek
To flesh their glowing valour on the Greek ;
How well such deed becomes the turbaned brave
To bare the sabre's edge before a slave !
Infest his dwelling—but forbear to slay,
Their arms are strong, yet merciful to-day,
And do not deign to smite because they may !
Unless some gay caprice suggests the blow,
To keep in practice for the coming foe.
Revel and rout the evening hours beguile,
And they who wish to wear a head must smile ;
For Moslem mouths produce their choicest cheer,
And hoard their curses, till the coast is clear.

II

High in the hall reclined the turbaned Seyd ;
Around—the bearded chiefs he came to lead.
Removed the banquet, and the last pilaff—
Forbidden draughts, 'tis said, he dared to quaff,
Though to the rest the sober berry's juice,⁴
The slaves bear round for rigid Moslem's use ;
The long chibouques⁵ dissolving cloud supply,
While dance the Almas⁶ to wild minstrelsy.
The rising morn will view the chiefs embark ;
But waves are somewhat treacherous in the dark ;
And revellers may more securely sleep
On silken couch than o'er the rugged deep,
Feast there who can—nor combat till they must ;
And less to conquest than to Korans trust ;
And yet the numbers crowded in his host
Might warrant more than even the Pacha's boast.

III

With cautious reverence from the outer gate,
Slow stalks the slave, whose office there to wait,
Bows his bent head—his hand salutes the floor,
Ere yet his tongue the trusted tidings bore :
“ A captive Dervise, from the Pirates' nest
Escaped, is here—himself would tell the rest.”⁷
He took the sign from Seyd's assenting eye,
And led the holy man in silence nigh.
His arms were folded on his dark-green vest,
His step was feeble, and his look deprest ;
Yet worn he seemed of hardship more than years,

And pale his cheek with penance, not from fears.
 Vowed to his God—his sable locks he wore,
 And these his lofty cap rose proudly o'er;
 Around his form his loose long robe was thrown,
 And wrapped a breast bestowed on Heaven alone;
 Submissive, yet with self-possession manned,
 He calmly met the curious eyes that scanned;
 And question of his coming fain would seek,
 Before the Pacha's will allowed to speak.

IV

"Whence com'st thou, Dervise?"

"From the outlaw's den

A fugitive——"

"Thy capture where and when?"

"From Scalanovo's port to Scio's isle,
 The Saick was bound; but Alla did not smile
 Upon our course—the Moslem merchant's gains
 The Rovers won: our limbs have worn their chains.
 I had no death to fear, nor wealth to boast,
 Beyond the wandering freedom which I lost;
 At length a fisher's humble boat by night
 Afforded hope, and offered chance of flight:
 I seized the hour, and find my safety here—
 With thee—most mighty Pacha! who can fear?"

"How speed the outlaws? stand they well prepared
 Their plundered wealth, and robber's rock, to guard?
 Dream they of this our preparation, doomed
 To view with fire their scorpion nest consumed?"

"Pacha! the fettered captive's mourning eye,
 That weeps for flight, but ill can play the spy;
 I only heard the reckless waters roar,
 Those waves that would not bear me from the shore;
 I only marked the glorious sun and sky,
 Too bright—too blue—for my captivity;
 And felt—that all which Freedom's bosom cheers,
 Must break my chain before it dried my tears.
 This may'st thou judge, at least, from my escape,
 They little deem of aught in peril's shape;
 Else vainly had I prayed or sought the chance
 That leads me here—if eyed with vigilance:
 The careless guard that did not see me fly,
 May watch as idly when thy power is nigh.
 Pacha!—my limbs are faint—and nature craves
 Food for my hunger, rest from tossing waves:

Permit my absence—peace be with thee! Peace
With all around!—now grant repose—release.”

“Stay, Dervise! I have more to question—stay,
I do command thee—sit—dost hear?—obey!
More I must ask, and food the slaves shall bring;
Thou shalt not pine where all are banqueting:
The supper done—prepare thee to reply,
Clearly and full—I love not mystery.”

’Twere vain to guess what shook the pious man
Who looked not lovingly on that Divan;
Nor showed high relish for the banquet prest,
And less respect for every fellow-guest.

’Twas but a moment’s peevish hectic past
Along his cheek, and tranquillized as fast:
He sate him down in silence, and his look
Resumed the calmness which before forsook:
The feast was ushered in—but sumptuous fare
He shunned as if some poison mingled there.
For one so long condemned to toil and fast,
Methinks he strangely spares the rich repast.

“What ails thee, Dervise? eat—dost thou suppose
This feast a Christian’s? or my friends thy foes?
Why dost thou shun the salt? that sacred pledge,
Which, once partaken, blunts the sabre’s edge,
Makes even contending tribes in peace unite,
And hated hosts seem brethren to the sight!”

“Salt seasons dainties—and my food is still
The humblest root, my drink the simplest rill;
And my stern vow and order’s⁸ laws oppose
To break or mingle bread with friends or foes;
It may seem strange—if there be aught to dread,
That peril rests upon my single head;
But for thy sway—nay more—thy Sultan’s throne,
I taste nor bread nor banquet—save alone;
Infringed our order’s rule, the Prophet’s rage
To Mecca’s dome might bar my pilgrimage.”

“Well—as thou wilt—ascetic as thou art—
One question answer; then in peace depart.
How many?—Ha! it can not sure be day?
What star—what sun is bursting on the bay?
It shines a lake of fire!—away—away!
Ho! treachery! my guards! my scimitar!
The galleys feed the flames—and I afar!

Accursed Dervise!—these thy tidings—thou
Some villain spy—seize—cleave him—slay him now!"

Up rose the Dervise with that burst of light,
Nor less his change of form appalled the sight:
Up rose that Dervise—not in saintly garb,
But like a warrior bounding on his barb,
Dashed his high cap, and tore his robe away—
Shone his mailed breast, and flashed his sabre's ray!
His close but glittering casque, and sable plume,
More glittering eye, and black brow's sabler gloom
Glared on the Moslems' eyes some Afrit sprite,
Whose demon death-blow left no hope for fight.
The wild confusion, and the swarthy glow
Of flames on high, and torches from below!
The shriek of terror, and the mingling yell—
For swords began to clash, and shouts to swell—
Flung o'er that spot of earth the air of hell!
Distracted, to and fro, the flying slaves
Behold but bloody shore and fiery waves;
Naught heeded they the Pacha's angry cry,
They seize that Dervise!—seize on Zatanai!⁹
He saw their terror—checked the first despair
That urged him but to stand and perish there,
Since far too early and too well obeyed,
The flame was kindled ere the signal made;
He saw their terror—from his baldric drew
His bugle—brief the blast—but shrilly blew:
'Tis answered—"Well ye speed, my gallant crew!
Why did I doubt their quickness of career?
And deem design had left me single here?"
Sweeps his long arm—that sabre's whirling sway
Sheds fast atonement for its first delay:
Completes his fury what their fear begun,
And makes the many basely quail to one.
The cloven turbans o'er the chamber spread,
And scarce an arm dare rise to guard its head:
Even Seyd, convulsed, o'erwhelmed with rage, surprise,
Retreats before him, though he still defies.
No craven he—and yet he dreads the blow,
So much confusion magnifies his foe!
His blazing galleys still distract his sight,
He tore his beard, and foaming fled the fight;¹⁰
For now the pirates passed the Haram gate,
And burst within—and it were death to wait;
Where wild Amazement shrieking—kneeling throws
The sword aside—in vain—the blood o'erflows!

The Corsairs pouring, haste to where within,
Invited Conrad's bugle, and the din
Of groaning victims, and wild cries for life,
Proclaimed how well he did the work of strife.
They shout to find him grim and lonely there,
A glutted tiger mangling in his lair!
But short their greeting—shorter his reply—
“ 'Tis well—but Seyd escapes—and he must die—
Much hath been done—but more remains to do—
Their galleys blaze—why not their city too?”

v

Quick at the word—they seized him each a torch,
And fire the dome from minaret to porch.
A stern delight was fixed in Conrad's eye,
But sudden sunk—for on his ear the cry
Of women struck, and like a deadly knell
Knocked at that heart unmoved by battle's yell.

“Oh! burst the Haram—wrong not on your lives
One female form—remember—we have wives.
On them such outrage Vengeance will repay;
Man is our foe, and such 'tis ours to slay;
But still we spared—must spare the weaker prey.
Oh! I forgot—but Heaven will not forgive
If at my word the helpless cease to live:
Follow who will—I go—we yet have time
Our souls to lighten of at least a crime.”
He climbs the crackling stair—he bursts the door,
Nor feels his feet grow scorching with the floor;
His breath choked gasping with the volumed smoke,
But still from room to room his way he broke.
They search—they find—they save: with lusty arms
Each bears a prize of unregarded charms;
Calm their loud fears; sustain their sinking frames
With all the care defenceless beauty claims:
So well could Conrad tame their fiercest mood,
And check the very hands with gore imbued.
But who is she? whom Conrad's arms convey
From reeking pile and combat's wreck—away—
Who but the love of him he dooms to bleed?
The Haram queen—but still the slave of Seyd!

vi

Brief time had Conrad now to greet Gulnare,¹¹
Few words to reassure the trembling fair;
For in that pause compassion snatched from war,

The foe before retiring, fast and far,
 With wonder saw their footsteps unpursued,
 First slower fled—then rallied—then withstood.
 This Seyd perceives, then first perceives how few,
 Compared with his, the Corsair's roving crew,
 And blushes o'er his error, as he eyes
 The ruin wrought by panic and surprise.
 Alla il Alla! Vengeance swells the cry—
 Shame mounts to rage that must atone or die!
 And flame for flame and blood for blood must tell,
 The tide of triumph ebbs that flowed too well—
 When wrath returns to renovated strife,
 And those who fought for conquest strike for life.
 Conrad beheld the danger—he beheld
 His followers faint by freshening foes repelled;
 "One effort—one—to break the circling host!"
 They form—unite—charge—waver—all is lost!
 Within a narrower ring compressed, beset,
 Hopeless, not heartless, strive and struggle yet—
 Ah! now they fight in firmest file no more,
 Hemmed in—cut off—cleft down—and trampled o'er;
 But each strikes singly, silently, and home,
 And sinks outwearied rather than o'ercome,
 His last faint quittance rendering with his breath,
 Till the blade glimmers in the grasp of death!

VII

But first, ere came the rallying host to blows,
 And rank to rank, and hand to hand oppose,
 Gulnare and all her Haram handmaids freed,
 Safe in the dome of one who held their creed,
 By Conrad's mandate safely were bestowed,
 And dried those tears for life and fame that flowed?
 And when that dark-eyed lady, young Gulnare,
 Recalled those thoughts late wandering in despair,
 Much did she marvel o'er the courtesy
 That smoothed his accents; softened in his eye:
 'Twas strange—that robber thus with gore bedewed
 Seemed gentler than than Seyd in fondest mood.
 The Pacha wooed as if he deemed the slave
 Must seem delighted with the heart he gave;
 The Corsair vowed protection, soothed affright,
 As if his homage were a woman's right.
 "The wish is wrong—nay, worse for female—vain:
 Yet much I long to view that chief again;
 If but to thank for, what my fear forgot,
 The life—my loving lord remembered not!"

VIII

And him she saw, where thickest carnage spread,
But gathered breathing from the happier dead;
Far from his band, and battling with a host
That deem right dearly won the field he lost,
Felled—bleeding—baffled of the death he sought,
And snatched to expiate all the ills he wrought;
Preserved to linger and to live in vain,
While Vengeance pondered o'er new plans of pain,
And stanch'd the blood she saves to shed again—
But drop by drop, for Seyd's unglutted eye
Would doom him ever dying—ne'er to die!
Can this be he? triumphant late she saw,
When his red hand's wild gesture waved, a law!
'Tis he indeed—disarmed but undepressed,
His sole regret the life he still possessed;
His wounds too slight, though taken with that will,
Which would have kissed the hand that then could kill.
Oh, were there none, of all the many given,
To send his soul—he scarcely asked to heaven!
Must he alone of all retain his breath,
Who more than all had striven and struck for death?
He deeply felt—what mortal hearts must feel,
When thus reversed on faithless Fortune's wheel,
For crimes committed, and the victor's threat
Of lingering tortures to repay the debt—
He deeply, darkly felt; but evil pride
That led to perpetrate—now nerves to hide.
Still in his stern and self-collected mien
A conqueror's more than captive's air is seen,
Though faint with wasting toil and stiffening wound.
But few that saw—so calmly gazed around:
Though the far-shouting of the distant crowd,
Their tremors o'er, rose insolently loud,
The better warriors who beheld him near,
Insulted not the foe who taught them fear;
And the grim guards that to his durance led,
In silence eyed him with a secret dread.

IX

The Leech was sent—but not in mercy—there,
To note how much the life yet left could bear;
He found enough to load with heaviest chain,
And promise feeling for the wretch of pain:
To-morrow—yea—to-morrow's evening sun
Will sinking see impalement's pangs begun,
And rising with the wonted blush of morn

Behold how well or ill those pangs are borne.
Of torments this the longest and the worst,
Which adds all other agony to thirst,
That day by day death still forbears to slake,
While famished vultures flit around the stake.
"Oh! water—water!"—smiling Hate denies
The victim's prayer—for if he drinks—he dies.
This was his doom:—the Leech, the guard, were gone,
And left proud Conrad fettered and alone.

X

'Twere vain to paint to what his feelings grew—
It even were doubtful if their victim knew.
There is a war, a chaos of the mind,
When all its elements convulsed—combined—
Lie dark and jarring with perturbed force,
And gnashing with impenitent Remorse;
That juggling fiend—who never spake before—
But cries, "I warned thee!" when the deed is o'er.
Vain voice! the spirit burning but unbent,
May writhe—rebel—the weak alone repent!
Even in that lonely hour when most it feels,
And, to itself, all—all that self reveals,
No single passion, and no ruling thought
That leaves the rest as one unseen, unsought;
But the wild prospect when the soul reviews—
All rushing through their thousand avenues,
Ambition's dreams expiring, love's regret,
Endangered glory, life itself beset;
The joy untasted, the contempt or hate
'Gainst those who fain would triumph in our fate;
The hopeless past, the hasting future driven
Too quickly on to guess if hell or heaven;
Deeds, thoughts, and words, perhaps remembered not
So keenly till that hour, but ne'er forgot;
Things light or lovely in their acted time,
But now to stern reflection each a crime:
The withering sense of evil unrevealed,
Not cankering less because the more concealed—
All, in a word, from which all eyes must start,
That opening sepulchre—the naked heart,
Bares with its buried woes, till Pride awake,
To snatch the mirror from the soul—and break.
Ay—Pride can veil, and Courage brave it all,
All—all—before—beyond—the deadliest fall.
Each hath some fear, and he who least betrays,
The only hypocrite deserving praise:

Not the loud recreant wretch who boasts and flies ;
But he who looks on death—and silent dies.
So steeled by pondering o'er his far career,
He half-way meets him should he menace near !

XI

In the high chamber of his highest tower
Sate Conrad, fettered in the Pacha's power.
His palace perished in the flame—this fort
Contained at once his captive and his court.
Not much could Conrad of his sentence blame,
His foe, if vanquished, had but shared the same :—
Alone he sate—in solitude—and scanned
His guilty bosom, but that breast he manned :
One thought alone he could not—dared not meet—
“ Oh, how these tidings will Medora greet ? ”
Then—only then—his clanking hands he raised,
And strained with rage the chain on which he gazed ;
But soon he found—or feigned—or dreamed relief,
And smiled in self-derision of his grief.
“ And now come torture when it will—or may,
More need of rest to nerve me for the day ! ”
This said, with languor to his mat he crept,
And, whatsoe'er his visions, quickly slept.
'Twas hardly midnight when that fray begun,
For Conrad's plans matured, at once were done :
And Havoc loathes so much the waste of time,
She scarce had left an uncommitted crime.
One hour beheld him since the tide he stemmed—
Disguised—discovered—conquering—ta'en—condemned—
A chief on land—an outlaw on the deep—
Destroying—saving—prisoned—and asleep !

XII

He slept in calmest seeming—for his breath
Was hushed so deep—Ah ! happy if in death !
He slept—who o'er his placid slumber bends ?
His foes are gone—and here he hath no friends ;
Is it some seraph sent to grant him grace ?
No, 'tis an earthly form with heavenly face !
Its white arm raised a lamp—yet gently hid,
Lest the ray flash abruptly on the lid
Of that closed eye, which opens but to pain,
And once unclosed—but once may close again.
That form with eye so dark, and cheek so fair,
And auburn waves of gemmed and braided hair ;
With shape of fairy lightness—naked foot,

That shines like snow, and falls on earth as mute—
 Through guards and dunnest night how came it there?
 Ah! rather ask what will not woman dare?
 Whom youth and pity lead like thee, Gulnare!
 She could not sleep—and while the Pacha's rest
 In muttering dreams yet saw his pirate-guest,
 She left his side—his signet-ring she bore,
 Which oft in sport adorned her hand before—
 And with it, scarcely questioned, won her way
 Through drowsy guards that must that sign obey.
 Worn out with toil, and tired with changing blows,
 Their eyes had envied Conrad his repose;
 And chill and nodding at the turret door,
 They stretch their listless limbs, and watch no more:
 Just raised their heads to hail the signet-ring,
 Nor ask or what or who the sign may bring.

XIII

She gazed in wonder, "Can he calmly sleep,
 While other eyes his fall or ravage weep?
 And mine in restlessness are wandering here—
 What sudden spell hath made this man so dear?
 True—'tis to him my life, and more, I owe,
 And me and mine he spared from worse than woe!
 'Tis late to think—but soft—his slumber breaks—
 How heavily he sighs!—he starts—awakes!"

He raised his head—and dazzled with the light,
 His eye seemed dubious if it saw aright:
 He moved his hand—the grating of his chain
 Too harshly told him that he lived again.
 "What is that form? if not a shape of air,
 Methinks, my jailor's face shows wondrous fair!"

"Pirate! thou know'st me not—but I am one
 Grateful for deeds thou hast too rarely done;
 Look on me—and remember her thy hand
 Snatched from the flames, and thy more fearful band.
 I come through darkness—and I scarce know why—
 Yet not to hurt—I would not see thee die."

"If so, kind lady! thine the only eye
 That would not here in that gay hope delight:
 Theirs is the chance—and let them use their right.
 But still I thank their courtesy or thine,
 That would confess me at so fair a shrine!"

Strange though it seem—yet with extremest grief
Is linked a mirth—it doth not bring relief—
That playfulness of Sorrow ne'er beguiles,
And smiles in bitterness—but still it smiles;
And sometimes with the wisest and the best,
Till even the scaffold¹² echoes with their jest!
Yet not the joy to which it seems akin—
It may deceive all hearts, save that within.
Whate'er it was that flashed on Conrad, now
A laughing wildness half unbent his brow:
And these his accents had a sound of mirth,
As if the last he could enjoy on earth;
Yet 'gainst his nature—for through that short life,
Few thoughts had he to spare from gloom and strife.

XIV

"Corsair! thy doom is named—but I have power
To soothe the Pacha in his weaker hour.
Thee would I spare—nay more—would save thee now,
But this—time—hope—nor even thy strength allow;
But all I can, I will: at least delay
The sentence that remits thee scarce a day.
More now were ruin—even thyself were loath
The vain attempt should bring but doom to both."

"Yes!—loath indeed:—my soul is nerved to all,
Or fallen too low to fear a further fall:
Tempt not thyself with peril; me with hope
Of flight from foes with whom I could not cope:
Unfit to vanquish—shall I meanly fly,
The one of all my band that would not die?
Yet there is one—to whom my memory clings,
Till to these eyes her own wild softness springs.
My sole resources in the path I trod
Were these—my bark—my sword—my love—my God!
The last I left in youth—He leaves me now—
And Man but works His will to lay me low.
I have no thought to mock His throne with prayer
Wrung from the coward crouching of despair;
It is enough—I breathe—and I can bear.
My sword is shaken from the worthless hand
That might have better kept so true a brand;
My bark is sunk or captive—but my love—
For her in sooth my voice would mount above:
Oh! she is all that still to earth can bind—
And this will break a heart so more than kind,

And blight a form—till thine appeared, Gulnare !
Mine eye ne'er asked if others were so fair."

"Thou lov'st another then?—but what to me
Is this—'tis nothing—nothing e'er can be :
But yet—thou lov'st—and—oh ! I envy those
Whose hearts on hearts as faithful can repose,
Who never feel the void—the wandering thought
That sighs o'er visions—such as mine hath wrought."

"Lady—methought thy love was his, for whom
This arm redeemed thee from a fiery tomb."

"My love stern Seyd's ! Oh—No—No—not my love—
Yet much this heart, that strives no more, once strove
To meet his passion—but it would not be.
I felt—I feel—love dwells with—with the free.
I am a slave, a favoured slave at best,
To share his splendour, and seem very blest !
Oft must my soul the question undergo,
Of—'Dost thou love?' and burn to answer, 'No !'
Oh ! hard it is that fondness to sustain,
And struggle not to feel averse in vain ;
But harder still the heart's recoil to bear,
And hide from one—perhaps another there.
He takes the hand I give not—nor withhold—
Its pulse nor checked—nor quickened—calmly cold
And when resigned, it drops a lifeless weight
From one I never loved enough to hate.
No warmth these lips return by his imprest,
And chilled remembrance shudders o'er the rest.
Yes—had I ever proved that passion's zeal,
The change to hatred were at least to feel :
But still—he goes unmourned—returns unsought—
And oft when present—absent from my thought.
Or when reflection comes, and come it must—
I fear that henceforth 'twill but bring disgust ;
I am his slave—but, in despite of pride,
'Twere worse than bondage to become his bride.
Oh that this dotage of his breast would cease !
Or seek another and give mine release,
But yesterday—I could have said, to peace !
Yes—if unwonted fondness now I feign,
Remember—captive ! 'tis to break thy chain ;
Repay the life that to thy hand I owe ;
To give thee back to all endeared below,
Who share such love as I can never know.

Farewell—morn breaks—and I must now away :
 "Twill cost me dear—but dread no death to-day !"

XV

She pressed his fettered fingers to her heart,
 And bowed her head, and turned her to depart,
 And noiseless as a lovely dream is gone.
 And was she here ? and is he now alone ?
 What gem hath dropped and sparkles o'er his chain ?
 The tear most sacred, shed for others' pain,
 That starts at once—bright—pure—from Pity's mine,
 Already polished by the hand divine !

Oh ! too convincing—dangerously dear—
 In woman's eye the unanswerable tear !
 That weapon of her weakness she can wield,
 To save, subdue—at once her spear and shield :
 Avoid it—Virtue ebbs and Wisdom errs,
 Too fondly gazing on that grief of hers !
 What lost a world, and bade a hero fly ?
 The timid tear in Cleopatra's eye.
 Yet be the soft triumvir's fault forgiven ;
 By this—how many lose not earth—but heaven !
 Consign their souls to man's eternal foe,
 And seal their own to spare some wanton's woe.

XVI

'Tis morn—and o'er his altered features play
 The beams—without the hope of yesterday.
 What shall he be ere night ? perchance a thing
 O'er which the raven flaps her funeral wing :
 By his closed eye unheeded and unfelt,
 While sets that sun, and dews of evening melt,
 Chill—wet—and misty round each stiffened limb,
 Refreshing earth—reviving all but him !—

CANTO THE THIRD

"Come vedi—ancor non m'abbandona."—DANTE.

I

Slow sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
 Along Morea's hills the setting sun :
 Not, as in northern climes, obscurely bright,
 But one unclouded blaze of living light !

O'er the hushed deep the yellow beam he throws,
Gilds the green wave, that trembles as it glows.
On old Ægina's rock, and Idra's isle,
The god of gladness sheds his parting smile;
O'er his own regions lingering, loves to shine,
Though there his altars are no more divine.
Descending fast the mountain shadows kiss
Thy glorious gulf, unconquered Salamis!
Their azure arches through the long expanse
More deeply purpled meet his mellowing glance,
And tenderest tints, along their summits driven,
Mark his gay course, and own the hues of heaven;
Till, darkly shaded from the land and deep,
Behind his Delphian cliff he sinks to sleep.

On such an eve, his palest beam he cast,
When—Athens! here thy Wisest looked his last.
How watched thy better sons his farewell ray,
That closed their murdered sage's¹³ latest day!
Not yet—not yet—Sol pauses on the hill—
The precious hour of parting lingers still!
But sad his light to agonizing eyes,
And dark the mountain's once delightful dyes:
Gloom o'er the lovely land he seemed to pour,
The land, where Phœbus never frowned before;
But ere he sank below Cithæron's head,
The cup of woe was quaffed—the spirit fled;
The soul of him who scorned to fear or fly—
Who lived and died, as none can live or die:
But lo! from high Hymettus to the plain,
The queen of night asserts her silent reign.¹⁴
No murky vapour, herald of the storm,
Hides her fair face, nor girds her glowing form;
With cornice glimmering as the moonbeams play,
There the white column greets her grateful ray,
And, bright around with quivering beams beset,
Her emblem sparkles o'er the minaret:
The groves of olive scattered dark and wide
Where meek Cephissus pours his scanty tide,
The cypress saddening by the sacred mosque,
The gleaming turret of the gay kiosk,¹⁵
And, dun and sombre 'mid the holy calm,
Near Theseus' fane yon solitary palm,
All tinged with varied hues, arrest the eye—
And dull were his that passed them heedless by.
Again the Ægean, heard no more afar,
Lulls his chafed breast from elemental war;

Again his waves in milder tints unfold
Their long array of sapphire and of gold,
Mixed with the shades of many a distant isle,
That frown—where gentler ocean seems to smile.¹⁶

II

Not now my theme—why turn my thoughts to thee?
Oh! who can look along thy native sea,
Nor dwell upon thy name, whate'er the tale,
So much its magic must o'er all prevail?
Who that beheld that sun upon thee set,
Fair Athens! could thine evening face forget?
Not he—whose heart nor time nor distance frees,
Spell-bound within the clustering Cyclades!
Nor seems this homage foreign to his strain,
His Corsair's isle was once thine own domain—
Would that with freedom it were thine again!

III

The sun hath sunk—and, darker than the night,
Sinks with its beam upon the beacon height—
Medora's heart—the third day's come and gone—
With it he comes not—sends not—faithless one!
The wind was fair though light; and storms were none.
Last eve Anselmo's bark returned, and yet
His only tidings that they had not met!
Though wild, as now, far different were the tale
Had Conrad waited for that single sail.

The night-breeze freshens—she that day had passed
In watching all that Hope proclaimed a mast;
Sadly she sate—on high—Impatience bore
At last her footsteps to the midnight shore,
And there she wandered, heedless of the spray
That dashed her garments oft, and warned away;
She saw not—felt not this—nor dared depart,
Nor deemed it cold—her chill was at her heart;
Till grew such certainty from that suspense—
His very sight had shocked from life or sense!

It came at last—a sad and shattered boat,
Whose inmates first beheld whom first they sought;
Some bleeding—all most wretched—these the few—
Scarce knew they how escaped—this all they knew.
In silence, darkling, each appeared to wait
His fellow's mournful guess at Conrad's fate:
Something they would have said; but seemed to fear

To trust their accents to Medora's ear.
 She saw at once, yet sank not—trembled not—
 Beneath that grief, that loneliness of lot,
 Within that meek fair form, where feelings high,
 That deemed not till they found their energy.
 While yet was hope—they softened—fluttered—wept—
 All lost—that softness died not—but it slept;
 And o'er its slumber rose that strength which said,
 "With nothing left to love—there's naught to dread."
 'Tis more than Nature's; like the burning might
 Delirium gathers from the fever's height.

"Silent you stand—nor would I hear you tell
 What—speak not—breathe not—for I know it well—
 Yet would I ask—almost my lip denies
 The—quick your answer—tell me where he lies."

"Lady! we know not—scarce with life we fled;
 But here is one denies that he is dead:
 He saw him bound; and bleeding—but alive."

She heard no further—'twas in vain to strive—
 So throbbed each vein—each thought—till then withstood;
 Her own dark soul—these words at once subdued:
 She totters—falls—and senseless had the wave
 Perchance but snatched her from another grave;
 But that with hands though rude, yet weeping eyes,
 They yield such aid as Pity's haste supplies:
 Dash o'er her death-like cheek the ocean dew,
 Raise—fan—sustain—till life returns anew;
 Awake her handmaids, with the matrons leave
 That fainting form o'er which they gaze and grieve;
 Then seek Anselmo's cavern, to report
 The tale too tedious—when the triumph short.

IV

In that wild council words waxed warm and strange,
 With thoughts of ransom, rescue, and revenge;
 All, save repose or flight: still lingering there
 Breathed Conrad's spirit, and forbade despair;
 Whate'er his fate—the breasts he formed and led,
 Will save him living, or appease him dead.
 Woe to his foes! there yet survive a few,
 Whose deeds are daring, as their hearts are true.

V

Within the Haram's secret chamber sate
 Stern Seyd, still pondering o'er his captive's fate;

His thoughts on love and hate alternate dwell,
Now with Gulnare, and now in Conrad's cell;
Here at his feet the lovely slave reclined
Surveys his brow—would soothe his gloom of mind;
While many an anxious glance her large dark eye
Sends in its idle search for sympathy,
His only bends in seeming o'er his beads,¹⁷
But inly views his victim as he bleeds.

"Pacha! the day is thine; and on thy crest
Sits Triumph—Conrad taken—fallen the rest;
His doom is fixed—he dies: and well his fate
Was earned—yet much too worthless for thy hate:
Methinks, a short release, for ransom told
With all his treasure, not unwisely sold;
Report speaks largely of his pirate-hoard—
Would that of this my Pacha were the lord!
While baffled, weakened by this fatal fray—
Watched—followed—he were then an easier prey;
But once cut off—the remnant of his band
Embark their wealth, and seek a safer strand."

"Gulnare!—if for each drop of blood a gem
Were offered rich as Stamboul's diadem;
If for each hair of his a massy mine
Of virgin ore should supplicating shine;
If all our Arab tales divulge or dream
Of wealth were here—that gold should not redeem!
It had not now redeemed a single hour,
But that I know him fettered, in my power;
And, thirsting for revenge, I ponder still
On pang that longest rack, and latest kill."

"Nay, Seyd!—I seek not to restrain thy rage,
Too justly moved for mercy to assuage;
My thoughts were only to secure for thee
His riches—thus released, he were not free:
Disabled, shorn of half his might and band,
His capture could but wait thy first command."

"His capture could!—and shall I then resign
One day to him—the wretch already mine?
Release my foe!—at whose remonstrance?—thine?
Fair suitor!—to thy virtuous gratitude,
That thus repays this Giaour's relenting mood,
Which thee and thine alone of all could spare,
No doubt—regardless if the prize were fair,

My thanks and praise alike are due—now hear!
I have a counsel for thy gentler ear:
I do mistrust thee, woman! and each word
Of thine stamps truth on all Suspicion heard.
Borne in his arms through fire from yon Serai—
Say, wert thou lingering there with him to fly?
'Thou need'st not answer—thy confession speaks,
Already reddening on thy guilty cheeks;
Then, lovely dame, bethink thee! and beware:
'Tis not his life alone may claim such care!
Another word and—nay—I need no more.
Accursed was the moment when he bore
Thee from the flames, which better far—but—no—
I then had mourned thee with a lover's woe—
Now, 'tis thy lord that warns—deceitful thing!
Know'st thou that I can clip thy wanton wing?
In words alone I am not wont to chase:
Look to thyself—nor deem thy falsehood safe!”

He rose—and slowly, sternly thence withdrew,
Rage in his eye and threats in his adieu:
Ah! little recked that chief of womanhood—
Which frowns ne'er quelled, nor menaces subdued;
And little deemed he what thy heart, Gulnare!
When soft could feel, and when incensed could dare.
His doubts appeared to wrong—nor yet she knew
How deep the root from whence compassion grew—
She was a slave—from such may captives claim
A fellow-feeling, differing but in name;
Still half unconscious—heedless of his wrath,
Again she ventured on the dangerous path,
Again his rage repelled—until arose
That strife of thought—the source of woman's woes!

VI

Meanwhile—long anxious—weary—still—the same
Rolled day and night—his soul could never tame—
This fearful interval of doubt and dread,
When every hour might doom him worse than dead,
When every step that echoed by the gate
Might entering lead where axe and stake await;
When every voice that grated on his ear
Might be the last that he could ever hear;
Could terror tame—that spirit stern and high
Had proved unwilling as unfit to die;
’Twas worn—perhaps decayed—yet silent bore
That conflict deadlier far than all before:

The heat of fight, the hurry of the gale,
Leave scarce one thought inert enough to quail;
But bound and fixed in fettered solitude,
To pine, the prey of every changing mood;
To gaze on thine own heart; and meditate
Irrevocable faults, and coming fate—
Too late the last to shun—the first to mend—
To count the hours that struggle to thine end,
With not a friend to animate, and tell
To other ears that death became thee well;
Around thee foes to forge the ready lie,
And blot life's latest scene with calumny;
Before thee tortures, which the soul can dare,
Yet doubts how well the shrinking flesh may bear;
But deeply feels a single cry would shame,
To valour's praise thy last and dearest claim;
The life thou leav'st below, denied above
By kind monopolists of heavenly love;
And more than doubtful paradise—thy heaven
Of earthly hope—thy loved one from thee riven.
Such were the thoughts that outlaw must sustain
And govern pangs surpassing mortal pain:
And those sustained he—boots it well or ill?
Since not to sink beneath, is something still!

VII

The first day passed—he saw not her—Gulnare—
The second—third—and still she came not there;
But what her words avouched, her charms had done,
Or else he had not seen another sun.
The fourth day rolled along, and with the night
Came storm and darkness in their mingling might:
Oh! how he listened to the rushing deep,
That ne'er till now so broke upon his sleep;
And his wild spirit wilder wishes sent,
Roused by the roar of his own element!
Oft had he ridden on that winged wave,
And loved its roughness for the speed it gave;
And now its dashing echoed on his ear,
A long-known voice—alas! too vainly near!
Loud sung the wind above; and, doubly loud,
Shook o'er his turret cell the thunder-cloud;
And flashed the lightning by the latticed bar,
To him more genial than the midnight star:
Close to the glimmering grate he dragged his chain,
And hoped that peril might not prove in vain.
He raised his iron hand to Heaven, and prayed

One pitying flash to mar the form it made :
 His steel and impious prayer attract alike—
 The storm rolled onward, and disdained to strike ;
 Its peal waxed fainter—ceased—he felt alone,
 As if some faithless friend had spurned his groan !

VIII

The midnight passed—and to the massy door
 A light step came—it paused—it moved once more ;
 Slow turns the grating bolt and sullen key :
 'Tis as his heart foreboded—that fair she !
 Whate'er her sins, to him a guardian saint,
 And beauteous still as hermit's hope can paint ;
 Yet changed since last within that cell she came,
 More pale her cheek, more tremulous her frame :
 On him she cast her dark and hurried eye,
 Which spoke before her accents—"Thou must die !
 Yes, thou must die—there is but one resource,
 The last—the worst—if torture were not worse."

"Lady ! I look to none—my lips proclaim
 What last proclaimed they—Conrad still the same :
 Why shouldst thou seek an outlaw's life to spare,
 And change the sentence I deserve to bear ?
 Well have I earned—nor here alone—the meed
 Of Seyd's revenge, by many a lawless deed."

"Why should I seek ? because—oh ! didst thou not
 Redeem my life from worse than slavery's lot ?
 Why should I seek ?—hath misery made thee blind
 To the fond workings of a woman's mind !
 And must I say ? albeit my heart rebel
 With all that woman feels, but should not tell—
 Because—despite thy crimes—that heart is moved :
 It feared thee—thanked thee—pitied—maddened—loved.
 Reply not, tell not now thy tale again,
 Thou lov'st another—and I love in vain ;
 Though fond as mine her bosom, form more fair,
 I rush through peril which she would not dare.
 If that thy heart to hers were truly dear,
 Were I thine own—thou wert not lonely here :
 An outlaw's spouse—and leave her lord to roam !
 What hath such gentle dame to do with home ?
 But speak not now—o'er thine and o'er my head
 Hangs the keen sabre by a single thread ;
 If thou hast courage still, and would be free,
 Receive this poniard—rise—and follow me !"

“Ay—in my chains! my steps will gently tread,
With these adornments, o’er each slumbering head!
Thou hast forgot—is this a garb for flight?
Or is that instrument more fit for fight?”

“Misdoubting Corsair! I have gained the guard,
Ripe for revolt, and greedy for reward.
A single word of mine removes that chain:
Without some aid how here could I remain?
Well, since we met, hath sped my busy time,
If in aught evil, for thy sake the crime:
The crime—’tis none to punish those of Seyd.
That hated tyrant, Conrad—he must bleed!
I see thee shudder—but my soul is changed—
Wronged, spurned, reviled—and it shall be avenged—
Accused of what till now my heart disdained—
Too faithful, though to bitter bondage chained.
Yes, smile!—but he had little cause to sneer,
I was not treacherous then—nor thou too dear:
But he has said it—and the jealous well,
Those tyrants, teasing, tempting to rebel,
Deserve the fate their fretting lips foretell.
I never loved—he bought me—somewhat high—
Since with me came a heart he could not buy.
I was a slave unmurmuring: he hath said,
But for his rescue I with thee had fled.
’Twas false thou know’st—but let such augurs rue,
Their words are omens Insult renders true.
Nor was thy respite granted to my prayer;
This fleeting grace was only to prepare
New torments for thy life, and my despair.
Mine too he threatens; but his dotage still
Would fain reserve me for his lordly will;
When wearier of these fleeting charms and me,
There yawns the sack—and yonder rolls the sea,
What, am I then a toy for dotard’s play,
To wear but till the gliding frets away?
I saw thee—loved thee—owe thee all—would save,
If but to show how grateful is a slave.
But had he not thus menaced fame and life,
(And well he keeps his oaths pronounced in strife),
I still had saved thee—but the Pacha spared.
Now I am all thine own—for all prepared:
Thou lov’st me not—nor know’st—or but the worst.
Alas! this love—that hatred are the first—
Oh! couldst thou prove my truth, thou wouldst not start,
Nor fear the fire that lights an Eastern heart,

'Tis now the beacon of thy safety—now
 It points within the port a Mainote prow :
 But in one chamber, where our path must lead,
 There sleeps—he must not wake—the oppressor Seyd !”

“Gulnare—Gulnare—I never felt till now
 My abject fortune, withered fame so low :
 Seyd is mine enemy : had swept my band
 From earth with ruthless but with open hand,
 And therefore came I, in my bark of war,
 To smite the smiter with the scimitar ;
 Such is my weapon—not the secret knife—
 Who spares a woman's seeks not slumber's life.
 Thine saved I gladly, Lady, not for this—
 Let me not deem that mercy shown amiss.
 Now fare thee well—more peace be with thy breast !
 Night wears apace—my last of earthly rest !”

“Rest ! rest ! by sunrise must thy sinews shake,
 And thy limbs writhe around the ready stake.
 I heard the order—saw—I will not see—
 If thou wilt perish, I will fall with thee.
 My life—my love—my hatred—all below
 Are on this cast—Corsair ! 'tis but a blow !
 Without it flight were idle—how evade
 His sure pursuit ? my wrongs too unrepaid,
 My youth disgraced—the long, long wasted years,
 One blow shall cancel with our future fears ;
 But since the dagger suits thee less than brand,
 I'll try the firmness of a female hand.
 The guards are gained—one moment all were o'er—
 Corsair ! we meet in safety or no more ;
 If errs my feeble hand, the morning cloud
 Will hover o'er thy scaffold, and my shroud.”

IX

She turned, and vanished ere he could reply,
 But his glance followed far with eager eye ;
 And gathering, as he could, the links that bound
 His form, to curl their length, and curb their sound,
 Since bar and bolt no more his steps preclude,
 He, fast as fettered limbs allow, pursued.
 'Twas dark and winding, and he knew not where
 That passage led ; nor lamp nor guard were there ;
 He sees a dusky glimmering—shall he seek
 Or shun that ray so indistinct and weak ?

Chance guides his steps—a freshness seems to bear
Full on his brow, as if from morning air—
He reached an open gallery—on his eye
Gleamed the last star of night, the clearing sky :
Yet scarcely heeded these—another light
From a lone chamber struck upon his sight.
Toward it he moved ; a scarcely closing door
Revealed the ray within, but nothing more.
With hasty step a figure outward passed,
Then paused—and turned—and paused—'tis She at last !
No poniard in that hand—nor sign of ill—
“Thanks to that softening heart—she could not kill !”
Again he looked, the wildness of her eye
Starts from the day abrupt and fearfully.
She stopped—threw back her dark far-floating hair,
That nearly veiled her face and bosom fair :
As if she late had bent her leaning head
Above some object of her doubt or dread.
They meet—upon her brow—unknown—forgot—
Her hurrying hand had left—'twas but a spot—
Its hue was all he saw, and scarce withstood—
Oh ! slight but certain pledge of crime—'tis blood !

X

He had seen battle—he had brooded lone
O'er promised pangs to sentenced guilt foreshown ;
He had been tempted—chastened—and the chain
Yet on his arms might ever there remain :
But ne'er from strife—captivity—remorse—
From all his feelings in their inmost force—
So thrilled—so shuddered every creeping vein,
As now they froze before that purple stain.
That spot of blood, that light but guilty streak,
Had banished all the beauty from her cheek,
Blood he had viewed—could view unmoved—but then
It flowed in combat, or was shed by men !

XI

“'Tis done—he nearly waked—but it is done.
Corsair ! he perished—thou art dearly won.
All words would now be vain—away—away !
Our bark is tossing—'tis already day.
The few gained over, now are wholly mine,
And these thy yet surviving band shall join :
Anon my voice shall vindicate my hand,
When once our sail forsakes this hated strand.”

XII

She clapped her hands—and through the gallery pour,
Equipped for flight, her vassals—Greek and Moor;
Silent but quick they stoop, his chains unbind;
Once more his limbs are free as mountain wind!
But on his heavy heart such sadness sate,
As if they there transferred that iron weight.
No words are uttered—at her sign, a door
Reveals the secret passage to the shore;
The city lies behind—they speed, they reach
The glad waves dancing on the yellow beach;
And Conrad following, at her beck, obeyed,
Nor cared he now if rescued or betrayed;
Resistance was as useless as if Seyd
Yet lived to view the doom his ire decreed.

XIII

Embarked, the sail unfurled, the light breeze blew—
How much had Conrad's memory to review!
Sunk he in contemplation, till the cape
Where last he anchored reared its giant shape.
Ah!—since that fatal night, though brief the time,
Had swept an age of terror, grief, and crime.
As its far shadow frowned above the mast,
He veiled his face, and sorrowed as he passed;
He thought of all—Gonsalvo and his band,
His fleeting triumph and his failing hand;
He thought on her afar, his lonely bride:
He turned and saw—Gulnare, the homicide!

XIV

She watched his features till she could not bear
Their freezing aspect and averted air,
And that strange fierceness foreign to her eye,
Fell quenched in tears, too late to shed or dry.
She knelt beside him and his hand she pressed,
“Thou may'st forgive though Allah's self detest;
But for that deed of darkness what wert thou?
Reproach me—but not yet—O! spare me now!
I am not what I seem—this fearful night
My brain bewildered—do not madden quite!
If I had never loved—though less my guilt,
Thou hadst not lived to—hate me—if thou wilt.”

XV

She wrongs his thoughts, they more himself upbraid
Than her, though undesigned, the wretch he made;

But speechless all, deep, dark, and unexpressed,
They bleed within that silent cell—his breast.
Still onward, fair the breeze, nor rough the surge,
The blue waves sport around the stern they urge;
Far on the horizon's verge appears a speck,
A spot—a mast—a sail—an armed deck!
Their little bark her men of watch descry,
And ampler canvas woos the wind from high;
She bears her down majestically near,
Speed on her prow, and terror in her tier;
A flash is seen—the ball beyond her bow
Booms harmless, hissing to the deep below.
Up rose keen Conrad from his silent trance,
A long, long absent gladness in his glance:
“’Tis mine—my blood-red flag! again—again—
I am not all deserted on the main!”
They own the signal, answer to the hail,
Hoist out the boat at once, and slacken sail.
“’Tis Conrad! Conrad!” shouting from the deck,
Command nor duty could their transport check!
With light alacrity and gaze of pride,
They view him mount once more his vessel's side;
A smile relaxing in each rugged face,
Their arms can scarce forbear a rough embrace.
He, half forgetting danger and defeat,
Returns their greeting as a chief may greet,
Wrings with a cordial grasp Anselmo's hand,
And feels he yet can conquer and command!

XVI

These greetings o'er, the feelings that o'erflow,
Yet grieve to win him back without a blow;
They sailed prepared for vengeance—had they known
A woman's hand secured that deed her own,
She were their queen—less scrupulous are they
Than haughty Conrad how they win their way.
With many an asking smile, and wondering stare,
They whisper round, and gaze upon Gulnare;
And her, at once above—beneath her sex,
Whom blood appalled not, their regards perplex.
To Conrad turns her faint imploring eye,
She drops her veil, and stands in silence by;
Her arms are meekly folded on that breast,
Which—Conrad safe—to fate resigned the rest.
Though worse than frenzy could that bosom fill,
Extreme in love or hate, in good or ill,
The worst of crimes had left her woman still!

XVII

This Conrad marked and felt—ah! could he less?—
Hate of that deed—but grief for her distress;
What she has done no tears can wash away,
And Heaven must punish on its angry day;
But—it was done: he knew, whate'er her guilt,
For him that poniard smote, that blood was spilt;
And he was free—and she for him had given
Her all on earth, and more than all in heaven!
And now he turned him to that dark-eyed slave,
Whose brow was bowed beneath the glance he gave,
Who now seemed changed and humbled:—faint and meek,
But varying oft the colour of her cheek
To deeper shades of paleness—all its red
That fearful spot which stained it from the dead!
He took that hand—it trembled—now too late—
So soft in love—so wildly nerved in hate;
He clasped that hand—it trembled—and his own
Had lost its firmness, and his voice its tone.
“Gulnare!”—but she replied not—“dear Gulnare!”
She raised her eye—her only answer there—
At once she sought and sunk in his embrace:
If he had driven her from that resting-place,
His had been more or less than mortal heart,
But—good or ill—it bade her not depart.
Perchance, but for the bodings of his breast,
His latest virtue then had joined the rest.
Yet even Medora might forgive the kiss
That asked from form so fair no more than this,
The first, the last that Frailty stole from Faith—
To lips where Love had lavished all his breath,
To lips—whose broken sighs such fragrance fling
As he had fanned them freshly with his wing!

XVIII

They gain by twilight's hour their lonely isle.
To them the very rocks appear to smile;
The haven hums with many a cheering sound,
The beacons blaze their wonted stations round,
The boats are darting o'er the curly bay,
And sportive dolphins bend them through the spray;
Even the hoarse sea-bird's shrill, discordant shriek,
Greets like the welcome of his tuneless beak!
Beneath each lamp that through its lattice gleams,
Their fancy paints the friends that trim the beams.
Oh! what can sanctify the joys of home,
Like Hope's gay glance from Ocean's troubled foam?

XIX

The lights are high on beacon and from bower,
And 'midst them Conrad seeks Medora's tower:
He looks in vain—'tis strange—and all remark,
Amid so many, hers alone is dark.
'Tis strange—of yore its welcome never failed,
Nor now, perchance, extinguished, only veiled.
With the first boat descends he to the shore,
And looks impatient on the lingering oar.
Oh for a wing beyond the falcon's flight,
To bear him like an arrow to that height!
With the first pause the resting rowers gave,
He waits not—looks not—leaps into the wave,
Strives through the surge, bestrides the beach, and high
Ascends the path familiar to his eye.

He reached his turret door—he paused—no sound
Broke from within; and all was night around.
He knocked, and loudly—footstep nor reply
Announced that any heard or deemed him nigh;
He knocked—but faintly—for his trembling hand
Refused to aid his heavy heart's demand.
The portal opens—'tis a well-known face—
But not the form he panted to embrace.
Its lips are silent—twice his own essayed,
And failed to frame the question they delayed;
He snatched the lamp—its light will answer all—
It quits his grasp, expiring in the fall.
He would not wait for that reviving ray—
As soon could he have lingered there for day;
But, glimmering through the dusty corridor,
Another chequers o'er the shadowed floor;
His steps the chamber gain—his eyes behold
All that his heart believed not—yet foretold!

XX

He turned not—spoke not—sunk not—fixed his look,
And set the anxious frame that lately shook:
He gazed—how long we gaze despite of pain,
And know, but dare not own, we gaze in vain!
In life itself she was so still and fair,
That death with gentler aspect withered there;
And the cold flowers her colder hand contained,¹⁸
In that last grasp as tenderly were strained
As if she scarcely felt, but feigned a sleep,
And made it almost mockery yet to weep:
The long dark lashes fringed her lids of snow,

And veiled—thought shrinks from all that lurked below—
Oh! o'er the eye death most exerts his might,
And hurls the spirit from her throne of light!
Sinks those blue orbs in that long last eclipse,
But spares, as yet, the charm around her lips—
Yet, yet they seem as they forbore to smile,
And wished repose—but only for a while;
But the white shroud, and each extended tress,
Long—fair—but spread in utter lifelessness,
Which, late the sport of every summer wind,
Escaped the baffled wreath that strove to bind;
These—and the pale pure cheek, became the bier—
But she is nothing—wherefore is he here?

XXI

He asked no question—all were answered now
By the first glance on that still—marble brow.
It was enough—she died—what recked it how?
The love of youth, the hope of better years,
The source of softest wishes, tenderest fears,
The only living thing he could not hate,
Was reft at once—and he deserved his fate,
But did not feel it less;—the good explore,
For peace, those realms where guilt can never soar:
The proud—the wayward—who have fixed below
Their joy, and find this earth enough for woe,
Lose in that one their all—perchance a mite—
But who in patience parts with all delight?
Full many a stoic eye and aspect stern
Mask hearts where grief hath little left to learn;
And many a withering thought lies hid, not lost,
In smiles that least befit who wear them most.

XXII

By those, that deepest feel, is ill expressed
The indistinctness of the suffering breast;
Where thousand thoughts begin to end in one,
Which seeks from all the refuge found in none;
No words suffice the secret soul to show,
For Truth denies all eloquence to Woe.
On Conrad's stricken soul exhaustion pressed,
And stupor almost lulled it into rest;
So feeble now—his mother's softness crept
To those wild eyes, which like an infant's wept:
It was the very weakness of his brain,
Which thus confessed without relieving pain.
None saw his trickling tears—perchance, if seen,

That useless flood of grief had never been :
Nor long they flowed—he dried them to depart
In helpless—hopeless—brokenness of heart :
The sun goes forth—but Conrad's day is dim ;
And the night cometh—ne'er to pass from him.
There is no darkness like the cloud of mind,
On Grief's vain eye—the blindest of the blind !
Which may not—dare not see—but turns aside
To blackest shade—nor will endure a guide !

XXIII

His heart was formed for softness—warped to wrong ;
Betrayed too early, and beguiled too long ;
Each feeling pure—as falls the dropping dew
Within the grot ; like that had hardened too ;
Less clear, perchance, its earthly trials passed,
But sunk, and chilled, and petrified at last.
Yet tempests wear, and lightning cleaves the rock ;
If such his heart, so shattered it the shock.
There grew one flower beneath its rugged brow,
Though dark the shade—it sheltered—saved till now.
The thunder came—that bolt hath blasted both,
The Granite's firmness, and the Lily's growth :
The gentle plant hath left no leaf to tell
Its tale, but shrunk and withered where it fell ;
And of its cold protector, blacken round
But shivered fragments on the barren ground !

XXIV

'Tis morn—to venture on his lonely hour
Few dare ; though now Anselmo sought his tower.
He was not there—nor seen along the shore ;
Ere night, alarmed, their isle is traversed o'er :
Another morn—another bids them seek,
And shout his name till echo waxeth weak ;
Mount—grotto—cavern—valley searched in vain,
They find on shore a sea-boat's broken chain :
Their hope revives—they follow o'er the main.
'Tis idle all—moons roll on moons away,
And Conrad comes not—came not since that day :
Nor trace, nor tidings of his doom declare
Where lives his grief, or perished his despair !
Long mourned his band whom none could mourn beside ;
And fair the monument they gave his bride :
For him they raise not the recording stone—
His death yet dubious, deeds too widely known ;
He left a Corsair's name to other times,
Linked with one virtue, and a thousand crimes.¹⁹

NOTES

¹ The time in this poem may seem too short for the occurrences, but the whole of the Ægean isles are within a few hours' sail of the continent, and the reader must be kind enough to take the wind as I have often found it.

² "Orlando Furioso," Canto 10.

³ By night, particularly in a warm latitude, every stroke of the oar, every motion of the boat or ship, is followed by a slight flash like sheet-lightning from the water.

⁴ Coffee.

⁵ Pipe.

⁶ Dancing girls.

⁷ It has been objected that Conrad's entrance disguised as a spy is out of nature—perhaps so. I find something not unlike it in history.

⁸ "Anxious to explore with his own eyes the state of the Vandals, Majorian ventured, after disguising the colour of his hair, to visit Carthage in the character of his own ambassador; and Genseric was afterwards mortified by the discovery that he had entertained and dismissed the Emperor of the Romans. Such an anecdote may be rejected as an improbable fiction; but it is a fiction which would not have been imagined unless in the life of a hero."—Gibbon, "Decline and Fall."

⁹ The dervises are in colleges, and of different orders, as the monks.

¹⁰ Satan.

¹¹ A common and not very novel effect of Mussulman anger. See Prince Eugene's "Memoirs." "The Seraskier received a wound in the thigh; he plucked up his beard by the roots, because he was obliged to quit the field."

¹² Gulnare means, literally, the flower of the pomegranate.

¹³ In Sir Thomas More, for instance, on the scaffold; and Anne Boleyn in the Tower, when, grasping her neck, she remarked, that it "was too slender to trouble the headsman much." During one part of the French Revolution, it became a fashion to leave some "mot" as a legacy; and the quantity of facetious last words spoken during that period would form a melancholy jest-book of a considerable size.

¹⁴ Socrates drank the hemlock a short time before sunset (the hour of execution), though entreated by his disciples to wait till the sun went down.

¹⁵ The twilight in Greece is much shorter than in our own country; the days in winter are longer, but in summer of shorter duration.

¹⁶ The kiosk is a Turkish summer-house; the palm is without the present walls of Athens, not far from the Temple of Theseus, between which and the tree the wall intervenes. Cephissus' stream is indeed scanty, and Ilissus has no stream at all.

¹⁷ The opening lines, as far as section ii, have, perhaps, little business here, and were annexed to an unpublished (though printed) poem; but they were written on the spot in the spring of 1811, and—I scarce know why—the reader must excuse their appearance here if he can.

¹⁸ The Comboloio, or Mohammedan rosary. The beads are in number ninety-nine.

¹⁹ In the Levant it is the custom to strew flowers on the bodies of the dead, and in the hands of young persons to place a nosegay.

²⁰ That the point of honour which is represented in one instance of Conrad's character has not been carried beyond the bounds of probability, may perhaps be in some degree confirmed by the following anecdote, from an American newspaper, of a brother buccaneer in the year 1814:

"Our readers have all seen the account of the enterprise against the pirates of Barrataria; but few, we believe, were informed of the situation, history, or nature of that establishment. We have procured from a friend the following interesting narrative of the main facts, of which he has personal knowledge, and which can not fail to be of interest:

"Barrataria is a bay, or narrow arm of the Gulf of Mexico; it runs through a rich but very flat country, until it reaches within a mile of the Mississippi River, fifteen miles below the city of New Orleans. The bay has branches almost innumerable, in which persons can lie concealed from the severest scrutiny. It communicates with three lakes on the southwest side, and these with a lake of the same name, which lies contiguous to the sea, where there is an island formed by the two arms of this lake and the sea. The east and west points of this island were fortified in the year 1811 by a band of pirates, under the command of one Monsieur La Fitte. A large majority of these outlaws are of that class of the population of the State of Louisiana who fled from the island of St. Domingo during the troubles there, and took refuge in the island of Cuba; and when the last war between France and Spain commenced they were compelled to leave that island with the short notice of a few days. Without ceremony, they entered the United States, the most of them the State of Louisiana, with all the negroes they had possessed in Cuba. They were notified by the governor of that State of the clause in the Constitution which forbade the importation of slaves; but, at the same time, received the assurance of the governor that he would obtain, if possible, the approbation of the general government for their retaining this property.

"The island of Barrataria is situated about lat. 29 deg. 15 min., long. 92 deg. 30 min., and is as remarkable for its health as for the superior scale and shell fish with which its waters abound. The chief of this horde, like Charles de Moor, had mixed with his many vices some virtues. In the year 1813 this party had, from its turpitude and boldness, claimed the attention of the governor of Louisiana; and to break up the establishment, he thought proper to strike at the head. He therefore offered a reward of 500 dollars for the head of Monsieur La Fitte, who was well known to the inhabitants of the city of New Orleans, from his immediate connection, and his once having been a fencing-master in the city, of great reputation, which art he learned in Buonaparte's army, where he was a captain. The reward which was offered by the governor for the head of La Fitte was answered by the offer of a reward from the latter of 15,000 dollars for the head of the governor. The governor ordered out a company to march from the city to La Fitte's island, and to burn and destroy all the property, and to bring to the city of New Orleans all his banditti. This company, under the command of a man who had been the intimate associate of this bold captain, approached very near to the fortified island before he saw a man, or heard a sound, until he heard a whistle, not unlike a boatswain's call. Then it was he found himself surrounded by armed men, who had emerged from the secret avenues which led into Bayou. Here it was that the modern Charles de Moor developed his few noble traits; for to this man, who had come to destroy his life and all that was dear to him, he not only spared his life, but offered him that which would have made the honest soldier easy for the remainder of his days, which was indignantly refused. He then, with the approbation of his captor, returned to the city. This circumstance, and some concomitant events, proved that this band of pirates was not to be taken by land. Our naval force having always been small in that quarter, exertions for the destruction of this illicit establishment could not be expected from them until augmented; for an officer of the navy, with most of the gun-boats on that station, had to retreat from an overwhelming force of La Fitte. So soon as the augmentation of the navy authorized an attack, one was made; and, now this almost invulnerable point and key to New Orleans is clear of an enemy, it is to be hoped the government will hold it by a strong military force."

LARA¹

CANTO THE FIRST

I

THE Serfs are glad through Lara's wide domain,²
And slavery half forgets her feudal chain;
He, their unhop'd, but unforgotten lord—
The long self-exil'd chieftain is restored:
There be bright faces in the busy hall,
Bowls on the board, and banners on the wall;
Far chequering o'er the pictured window, plays
The unwonted fagots' hospitable blaze;
And gay retainers gather round the hearth,
With tongues all loudness, and with eyes all mirth.

II

The chief of Lara is returned again:
And why had Lara crossed the bounding main?
Left by his sire, too young such loss to know,
Lord of himself;—that heritage of woe,
That fearful empire which the human breast
But holds to rob the heart within of rest!—
With none to check, and few to point in time
The thousand paths that slope the way to crime;
Then, when he most required commandment, then
Had Lara's daring boyhood governed men.
It skills not, boots not, step by step to trace
His youth through all the mazes of its race;
Short was the course his restlessness had run,
But long enough to leave him half undone.

III

And Lara left in youth his fatherland;
But from the hour he waved his parting hand
Each trace waxed fainter of his course, till all
Had nearly ceased his memory to recall.

His sire was dust, his vassals could declare,
'Twas all they knew, that Lara was not there;
Nor sent, nor came he, till conjecture grew
Cold in the many, anxious in the few.
His hall scarce echoes with his wonted name,
His portrait darkens in its fading frame,
Another chief consoled his destined bride,
The young forgot him, and the old had died;
"Yet doth he live!" exclaims the impatient heir,
And sighs for sabres which he must not wear.
A hundred scutcheons deck with gloomy grace
The Laras' last and longest dwelling-place;
But one is absent from the mouldering file,
That now were welcome to that Gothic pile.

IV

He comes at last in sudden loneliness,
And whence they know not, why they need not guess;
They more might marvel, when the greeting's o'er,
Not that he came, but came not long before:
No train is his beyond a single page,
Of foreign aspect, and of tender age.
Years had rolled on, and fast they speed away
To those that wander as to those that stay;
But lack of tidings from another clime
Had lent a flagging wing to weary Time.
They see, they recognise, yet almost deem
The present dubious, or the past a dream.

He lives, nor yet is past his manhood's prime,
Though seared by toil, and something touched by time;
His faults, whate'er they were, if scarce forgot,
Might be untaught him by his varied lot;
Nor good nor ill of late were known, his name
Might yet uphold his patrimonial fame.
His soul in youth was haughty, but his sins
No more than pleasure from the stripling wins;
And such, if not yet hardened in their course,
Might be redeemed, nor ask a long remorse.

V

And they indeed were changed—'tis quickly seen,
Whate'er he be, 'twas not what he had been:
That brow in furrowed lines had fixed at last,
And spake of passions, but of passion past;
The pride, but not the fire, of early days,
Coldness of mien, and carelessness of praise;

A high demeanour, and a glance that took
Their thoughts from others by a single look ;
And that sarcastic levity of tongue,
The stinging of a heart the world hath stung,
That darts in seeming playfulness around,
And makes those feel that will not own the wound :
All these seemed his, and something more beneath,
Than glance could well reveal, or accent breathe.
Ambition, glory, love, the common aim
That some can conquer, and that all would claim,
Within his breast appeared no more to strive,
Yet seemed as lately they had been alive ;
And some deep feeling it were vain to trace
At moments lighted o'er his livid face.

VI

Not much he loved long question of the past,
Nor told of wondrous wilds, and deserts vast,
In those far lands where he had wandered lone,
And—as himself would have it seem—unknown :
Yet these in vain his eye could scarcely scan,
Nor glean experience from his fellow-man ;
But what he had beheld he shunned to show,
As hardly worth a stranger's care to know ;
If still more prying such inquiry grew,
His brow fell darker, and his words more few.

VII

Not unrejoiced to see him once again,
Warm was his welcome to the haunts of men ;
Born of high lineage, linked in high command,
He mingled with the magnates of his land ;
Joined the carousals of the great and gay,
And saw them smile or sigh their hours away ;
But still he only saw, and did not share
The common pleasure or the general care ;
He did not follow what they all pursued,
With hope still baffled, still to be renewed ;
Nor shadowy honour, nor substantial gain,
Nor beauty's preference, and the rival's pain :
Around him some mysterious circle thrown
Repelled approach, and showed him still alone ;
Upon his eye sate something of reproof,
That kept at least frivolity aloof ;
And things more timid that beheld him near,
In silence gazed, or whispered mutual fear ;
And they the wiser, friendlier few confessed
They deemed him better than his air expressed.

VIII

'Twas strange—in youth all action and all life,
Burning for pleasure, not averse from strife;
Woman—the field—the ocean—all that gave
Promise of gladness, peril of a grave,
In turn he tried—he ransacked all below,
And found his recompense in joy or woe,
No tame, trite medium; for his feelings sought
In that intenseness an escape from thought:
The tempest of his heart in scorn had gazed
On that the feebler elements hath raised;
The rapture of his heart had looked on high,
And asked if greater dwelt beyond the sky:
Chained to excess, the slave of each extreme,
How woke he from the wildness of that dream?
Alas! he told not—but he did awake
To curse the withered heart that would not break.

IX

Books, for his volume heretofore was Man,
With eye more curious he appeared to scan,
And oft, in sudden mood, for many a day
From all communion he would start away:
And then, his rarely called attendants said,
Through night's long hours would sound his hurried tread
O'er the dark gallery, where his fathers frowned
In rude but antique portraiture around.
They heard, but whispered—"that must not be known—
The sound of words less earthly than his own.
Yes, they who chose might smile, but some had seen
They scarce knew what, but more than should have been.
Why gazed he so upon the ghastly head
Which hands profane had gathered from the dead,
That still beside his opened volume lay,
As if to startle all save him away?
Why slept he not when others were at rest?
Why heard no music, and received no guest?
All was not well, they deemed—but where the wrong?
Some knew perchance—but 'twere a tale too long;
And such besides were too discreetly wise,
To more than hint their knowledge in surmise;
But if they would—they could"—around the board,
Thus Lara's vassals prattled of their lord.

X

It was the night—and Lara's glassy stream
The stars are studding, each with imaged beam:

So calm, the waters scarcely seem to stray,
And yet they glide like happiness away;
Reflecting far and fairy-like from high
The immortal lights that live along the sky:
Its banks are fringed with many a goodly tree,
And flowers the fairest that may feast the bee;
Such in her chaplet infant Dian wove,
And Innocence would offer to her love.
These deck the shore; the waves their channel make
In windings bright and mazy like the snake.
All was so still, so soft in earth and air,
You scarce would start to meet a spirit there;
Secure that naught of evil could delight
To walk in such a scene, on such a night!
It was a moment only for the good:
So Lara deemed, nor longer there he stood,
But turned in silence to his castle-gate;
Such scene his soul no more could contemplate:
Such scene reminded him of other days,
Of skies more cloudless, moons of purer blaze,
Of nights more soft and frequent, hearts that now—
No—no—the storm may beat upon his brow,
Unfelt—unsparing—but a night like this,
A night of beauty mocked such breast as his.

XI

He turned within his solitary hall,
And his high shadow shot along the wall;
There were the painted forms of other times,
’Twas all they left of virtues or of crimes,
Save vague tradition; and the gloomy vaults
That hid their dust, their foibles, and their faults;
And half a column of the pompous page,
That speeds the specious tale from age to age:
When history’s pen its praise or blame supplies,
And lies like truth, and still most truly lies.
He wandering mused, and as the moonbeam shone
Through the dim lattice o’er the floor of stone,
And the high fretted roof, and saints, that there
O’er Gothic windows knelt in pictured prayer,
Reflected in fantastic figures grew,
Like life, but not like mortal life, to view;
His bristling locks of sable, brow of gloom,
And the wide waving of his shaken plume,
Glanced like a spectre’s attributes, and gave
His aspect all that terror gives the grave.

XII

'Twas midnight—all was slumber ; the lone light
Dimmed in the lamp, as loath to break the night.
Hark ! there be murmurs heard in Lara's hall—
A sound—a voice—a shriek—a fearful call !
A long, loud shriek—and silence—did they hear
That frantic echo burst the sleeping ear ?
They heard and rose, and tremulously brave
Rush where the sound invoked their aid to save ;
They come with half-lit tapers in their hands,
And snatched in startled haste unbelted brands.

XIII

Cold as the marble where his length was laid,
Pale as the beam that o'er his features played,
Was Lara stretched ; his half-drawn sabre near,
Dropped it should seem in more than nature's fear ;
Yet he was firm, or had been firm till now,
And still defiance knit his gathered brow ;
Though mixed with terror, senseless as he lay,
There lived upon his lip the wish to slay ;
Some half-formed threat in utterance there had died,
Some imprecation of despairing pride ;
His eye was almost sealed, but not forsook
Even in its trance the gladiator's look,
That oft awake his aspect could disclose,
And now was fixed in horrible repose.
They raise him—bear him : hush ! he breathes, he speaks,
The swarthy blush recolours in his cheeks.
His lip resumes its red, his eye, though dim,
Rolls wide and wild, each slowly quivering limb
Recalls its function, but his words are strung
In terms that seem not of his native tongue ;
Distinct but strange, enough they understand
To deem them accents of another land,
And such they were, and meant to meet an ear
That hears him not—alas ! that can not hear !

XIV

His page approached, and he alone appeared
To know the import of the words they heard ;
And by the changes of his cheek and brow
They were not such as Lara should avow,
Nor he interpret, yet with less surprise
Than those around their chieftain's state he eyes,
But Lara's prostrate form he bent beside,
And in that tongue which seemed his own replied,

And Lara heeds those tones that gently seem
To soothe away the horrors of his dream;
If dream it were, that thus could overthrow
A breast that needed not ideal woe.

XV

Whate'er his frenzy dreamed or eye beheld,
If yet remembered ne'er to be revealed,
Rests at his heart: the customary morning came,
And breathed new vigour in his shaking frame;
And solace sought he none from priest nor leech,
And soon the same in movement and in speech
As heretofore he filled the passing hours,
Nor less he smiles, nor more his forehead lowers
Than these were wont; and if the coming night
Appeared less welcome now to Lara's sight,
He to his marvelling vassals showed it not,
Whose shuddering proved their fear was less forgot.
In trembling pairs (alone they dared not) crawl
The astonished slaves, and shun the fated hall;
The waving banner, and the clapping door;
The rustling tapestry, and the echoing floor;
The long dim shadows of surrounding trees,
The flapping bat, the night song of the breeze;
Aught they behold or hear their thought appals
As evening saddens o'er the dark gray walls.

XVI

Vain thought! that hour of ne'er unravelled gloom
Came not again, or Lara could assume
A seeming of forgetfulness that made
His vassals more amazed nor less afraid—
Had memory vanished then with sense restored?
Since word, nor look, nor gesture of their lord
Betrayed a feeling that recalled to these
That fevered moment of his mind's disease.
Was it a dream? was his the voice that spoke
Those strange wild accents; his the cry that broke
Their slumber? his the oppressed o'er-laboured heart
That ceased to beat, the look that made them start?
Could he who thus had suffered, so forget
When such as saw that suffering shudder yet?
Or did that silence prove his memory fixed
Too deep for words, indelible, unmixed
In that corroding secrecy which gnaws
The heart to show the effect, but not the cause?
Not so in him; his breast had buried both,

Nor common gazers could discern the growth
Of thoughts that mortal lips must leave half told;
They choke the feeble words that would unfold.

XVII

In him inexplicably mixed appeared
Much to be loved and hated, sought and feared;
Opinion varying o'er his hidden lot,
In praise or railing ne'er his name forgot;
His silence formed a theme for others' prate—
They guessed—they gazed—they fain would know his fate.
What had he been? what was he, thus unknown,
Who walked their world, his lineage only known?
A hater of his kind? yet some would say,
With them he could seem gay amidst the gay;
But owned that smile, if oft observed and near,
Waned in its mirth and withered to a sneer;
That smile might reach his lip, but passed not by,
None e'er could trace its laughter to his eye:
Yet there was softness too in his regard,
At times a heart as not by nature hard,
But once perceived, his spirit seemed to chide
Such weakness, as unworthy of its pride,
And steeled itself, as scorning to redeem
One doubt from others' half-withheld esteem;
In self-inflicted penance of a breast
Which tenderness might once have wrung from rest;
In vigilance of grief that would compel
The soul to hate for having loved too well.

XVIII

There was in him a vital scorn of all:
As if the worst had fallen which could befall,
He stood a stranger in this breathing world,
An erring spirit from another hurled;
A thing of dark imaginings, that shaped
By choice the perils he by chance escaped;
But 'scaped in vain, for in their memory yet
His mind would half exult and half regret:
With more capacity for love than earth
Bestows on most of mortal mould and birth,
His early dreams of good outstripped the truth,
And troubled manhood followed baffled youth;
With thought of years in phantom chase misspent,
And wasted powers for better purpose lent;
And fiery passions that had poured their wrath
In hurried desolation o'er his path,

And left the better feelings all at strife
In wild reflection o'er his stormy life;
But haughty still, and loath himself to blame,
He called on Nature's self to share the shame,
And charged all faults upon the fleshly form
She gave to clog the soul, and feast the worm;
Till he at last confounded good and ill,
And half mistook for fate the acts of will:
Too high for common selfishness, he could
At times resign his own for others' good,
But not in pity, not because he ought,
But in some strange perversity of thought,
That swayed him onward with a secret pride
To do what few or none would do beside:
And this same impulse would, in tempting time,
Mislead his spirit equally to crime;
So much he soared beyond, or sunk beneath
The men with whom he felt condemned to breathe,
And longed by good or ill to separate
Himself from all who shared his mortal state;
His mind abhorring this had fixed her throne
Far from the world, in regions of her own;
Thus coldly passing all that passed below,
His blood in temperate seeming now would flow:
Ah! happier if it ne'er with guilt had glowed,
But ever in that icy smoothness flowed:
'Tis true, with other men their path he walked,
And like the rest in seeming did and talked,
Nor outraged Reason's rules by flaw nor start,
His madness was not of the head, but heart;
And rarely wandered in his speech, or drew
His thoughts so forth as to offend the view.

XIX

With all that chilling mystery of mien,
And seeming gladness to remain unseen;
He had (if 'twere not Nature's boon) an art
Of fixing memory on another's heart:
It was not love, perchance—nor hate—nor aught
That words can image to express the thought;
But they who saw him did not see in vain,
And once beheld, would ask of him again:
And those to whom he spake remembered well,
And on the words, however light, would dwell:
None knew nor how, nor why, but he entwined
Himself perforce around the hearer's mind;
There he was stamped, in liking, or in hate,

If greeted once; however brief the date
That friendship, pity, or aversion knew,
Still there within the inmost thought he grew.
You could not penetrate his soul, but found,
Despite your wonder, to your own he wound;
His presence haunted still; and from the breast
He forced an all-unwilling interest;
Vain was the struggle in that mental net,
His spirit seemed to dare you to forget!

XX

There is a festival, where knights and dames,
And aught that wealth or lofty lineage claims,
Appear—a high-born and a welcomed guest
To Otho's hall came Lara with the rest.
The long carousal shakes the illumined hall,
Well speeds alike the banquet and the ball;
And the gay dance of bounding Beauty's train
Links grace and harmony in happiest chain:
Blest are the early hearts and gentle hands
That mingle there in well-accorded bands;
It is a sight the careful brow might smooth,
And make Age smile, and dream itself to youth,
And Youth forget such hour was passed on earth,
So springs the exulting bosom to that mirth!

XXI

And Lara gazed on these, sedately glad,
His brow belied him if his soul was sad,
And his glance followed fast each fluttering fair,
Whose steps of lightness woke no echo there:
He leaned against the lofty pillar nigh
With folded arms and long attentive eye,
Nor marked a glance so sternly fixed on his,
Ill brooked high Lara scrutiny like this:
At length he caught it, 'tis a face unknown,
But seems as searching his, and his alone;
Prying and dark, a stranger's by his mien,
Who still till now had gazed on him unseen;
At length encountering meets the mutual gaze
Of keen inquiry, and of mute amaze;
On Lara's glance emotion gathering grew,
As if distrusting that the stranger threw;
Along the stranger's aspect fixed and stern
Flashed more than thence the vulgar eye could learn.

XXII

"'Tis he!" the stranger cried, and those that heard
 Re-echoed fast and far the whispered word.
 "'Tis he!"—" 'Tis who?" they question far and near,
 Till louder accents rung on Lara's ear;
 So widely spread, few bosoms well could brook
 The general marvel, or that single look;
 But Lara stirred not, changed not, the surprise
 That sprung at first to his arrested eyes
 Seemed now subsided, neither sunk nor raised
 Glanced his eye round, though still the stranger gazed;
 And drawing nigh, exclaimed, with haughty sneer,
 "'Tis he!—how came he thence?—what doth he here?"

XXIII

It were too much for Lara to pass by
 Such question, so repeated fierce and high;
 With look collected, but with accent cold,
 More mildly firm than petulantly bold,
 He turned, and met the inquisitorial tone—
 "My name is Lara!—when thine own is known,
 Doubt not my fitting answer to requite
 The unlooked-for courtesy of such a knight.
 "'Tis Lara!—further wouldst thou mark or ask?
 I shun no question, and I wear no mask."
 "Thou shunnest no question! Ponder—is there none
 Thy heart might answer, though thine ear would shun?
 And deem'st thou me unknown too? Gaze again!
 At least thy memory was not given in vain.
 Oh! never canst thou cancel half the debt,
 Eternity forbids thee to forget."
 With slow and searching glance upon his face
 Grew Lara's eyes, but nothing there could trace
 They knew, or chose to know—with dubious look
 He deigned no answer, but his head he shook,
 And half contemptuous turned to pass away;
 But the stern stranger motioned him to stay.
 "A word!—I charge thee stay, and answer here
 To one, who, wert thou noble, were thy peer,
 But as thou wast and art—nay, frown not, lord,
 If false, 'tis easy to disprove the word—
 But as thou wast and art, on thee looks down,
 Distrusts thy smiles, but shakes not at thy frown.
 Art thou not he? whose deeds——"

"Whate'er I be,
 Words wild as these, accusers like to thee,
 I list no further; those with whom they weigh

May hear the rest, nor venture to gainsay
The wondrous tale no doubt thy tongue can tell,
Which thus begins so courteously and well.
Let Otho cherish here his polished guest,
To him my thanks and thoughts shall be expressed."
And here their wondering host hath interposed :
"Whate'er there be between you undisclosed,
This is no time nor fitting place to mar
The mirthful meeting with a wordy war.
If thou, Sir Ezzelin, hast aught to show
Which it befits Count Lara's ear to know,
To-morrow, here, or elsewhere, as may best
Beseem your mutual judgment, speak the rest ;
I pledge myself for thee, as not unknown,
Though, like Count Lara, now returned alone
From other lands, almost a stranger grown ;
And if from Lara's blood and gentle birth
I augur right of courage and of worth,
He will not that untainted line belie,
Nor aught that knighthood may accord deny."
"To-morrow be it," Ezzelin replied,
"And here our several worth and truth be tried ;
I gage my life, my falchion to attest
My words, so may I mingle with the blest !"
What answers Lara ? to its centre shrunk
His soul, in deep abstraction sudden sunk ;
The words of many, and the eyes of all
That there were gathered, seemed on him to fall ;
But his were silent, his appeared to stray
In far forgetfulness away—away—
Alas ! that heedlessness of all around
Bespoke remembrance only too profound.

XXIV

"To-morrow!—ay, to-morrow!" further word
Than those repeated none from Lara heard ;
Upon his brow no outward passion spoke,
From his large eye no flashing anger broke ;
Yet there was something fixed in that low tone
Which showed resolve, determined, though unknown.
He seized his cloak—his head he slightly bowed,
And passing Ezzelin he left the crowd ;
And, as he passed him, smiling met the frown
With which that chieftain's brow would bear him down :
It was nor smile of mirth, nor struggling pride
That curbs to scorn the wrath it can not hide ;
But that of one in his own heart secure

Of all that he would do, or could endure.
Could this mean peace? the calmness of the good?
Or guilt grown old in desperate hardihood?
Alas! too like in confidence are each
For man to trust to mortal look or speech;
From deeds, and deeds alone, may he discern
Truths which it wrings the unpractised heart to learn.

XXV

And Lara called his page, and went his way—
Well could that stripling word or sign obey:
His only follower from those climes afar
Where the soul glows beneath a brighter star;
For Lara left the shore from whence he sprung,
In duty patient, and sedate though young;
Silent as him he served, his fate appears
Above his station, and beyond his years.
Though not unknown the tongue of Lara's land,
In such from him he rarely heard command;
But fleet his step, and clear his tones would come,
When Lara's lip breathed forth the words of home:
Those accents, as his native mountains dear,
Awake their absent echoes in his ear,
Friends', kindred's, parents', wonted voice recall,
Now lost, abjured, for one—his friend, his all:
For him earth now disclosed no other guide;
What marvel then he rarely left his side?

XXVI

Light was his form, and darkly delicate
That brow whereon his native sun had sate,
But had not marred, though in his beams he grew,
The cheek where oft the unhidden blush shone through;
Yet not such blush as mounts when health would show
All the heart's hue in that delighted glow;
But 'twas a hectic tint of secret care
That for a burning moment fevered there;
And the wild sparkle of his eye seemed caught
From high, and lightened with electric thought,
Though its black orb those long low lashes' fringe
Had tempered with a melancholy tinge;
Yet less of sorrow than of pride was there,
Or, if 'twere grief, a grief that none should share:
And pleased not him the sports that please his age,
The tricks of youth, the frolics of the page;
For hours on Lara he would fix his glance,
As all-forgotten in that watchful trance;

And from his chief withdrawn, he wandered lone,
Brief were his answers, and his questions none;
His walk the wood, his sport some foreign book;
His resting-place the bank that curbs the brook;
He seemed, like him he served, to live apart
From all that lures the eye, and fills the heart;
To know no brotherhood, and take from earth
No gift beyond that bitter boon—our birth.

XXVII

If aught he loved, 'twas Lara; but was shown
His faith in reverence and in deeds alone;
In mute attention; and his care, which guessed
Each wish, fulfilled it ere the tongue expressed.
Still there was haughtiness in all he did,
A spirit deep that brooked not to be chid;
His zeal, though more than that of servile hands,
In act alone obeys, his air commands;
As if 'twas Lara's less than his desire
That thus he served, but surely not for hire.
Slight were the tasks enjoined him by his lord,
To hold the stirrup, or to bear the sword;
To tune his lute, or, if he willed it more,
On tomes of other times and tongues to pore;
But ne'er to mingle with the menial train,
To whom he showed not deference nor disdain,
But that well-worn reserve which proved he knew
No sympathy with that familiar crew:
His soul, whate'er his station or his stem,
Could bow to Lara, not descend to them.
Of higher birth he seemed, and better days,
Nor mark of vulgar toil that hand betrays,
So femininely white it might bespeak
Another sex, when matched with that smooth cheek,
But for his garb, and something in his gaze,
More wild and high than woman's eye betrays;
A latent fierceness that far more became
His fiery climate than his tender frame:
True, in his words it broke not from his breast,
But from his aspect might be more than guessed.
Kaled his name, though rumour said he bore
Another ere he left his mountain shore;
For sometimes he would hear, however nigh,
That name repeated loud without reply,
As unfamiliar, or, if roused again,
Start to the sound, as but remembered then;

Unless 'twas Lara's wonted voice that spake,
For then, ear, eyes, and heart would all awake.

XXVIII

He had looked down upon the festive hall,
And marked that sudden strife so marked of all;
And when the crowd around and near him told
Their wonder at the calmness of the bold,
Their marvel how the high-born Lara bore
Such insult from a stranger, doubly sore,
The colour of young Kaled went and came,
The lip of ashes, and the cheek of flame;
And o'er his brow the dampening heart-drops threw
The sickening iciness of that cold dew
That rises as the busy bosom sinks
With heavy thoughts from which reflection shrinks.
Yes—there be things which we must dream and dare,
And execute ere thought be half aware:
Whate'er might Kaled's be, it was enow
To seal his lip, but agonize his brow,
He gazed on Ezzelin till Lara cast
That sidelong smile upon the knight he passed;
When Kaled saw that smile his visage fell,
As if on something recognised right well:
His memory read in such a meaning more
Than Lara's aspect unto others wore.
Forward he sprung—a moment, both were gone,
And all within that hall seemed left alone;
Each had so fixed his eye on Lara's mien,
All had so mixed their feelings with that scene,
That when his long dark shadow through the porch
No more relieves the glare of yon high torch,
Each pulse beats quicker, and all bosoms seem
To bound as doubting from too black a dream,
Such as we know is false, yet dread in sooth,
Because the worst is ever nearest truth.
And they are gone—but Ezzelin is there,
With thoughtful visage and imperious air;
But long remained not; ere an hour expired
He waved his hand to Otho, and retired.

XXIX

The crowd are gone, the revellers at rest;
The courteous host, and all-approving guest,
Again to that accustomed couch must creep
Where joy subsides, and sorrow sighs to sleep,
And man, o'erlaboured with his being's strife,

Shrinks to that sweet forgetfulness of life :
There lie love's feverish hope, and cunning's guile,
Hate's working brain, and lulled ambition's wile ;
O'er each vain eye oblivion's pinions wave,
And quenched existence crouches in a grave.
What better name may slumber's bed become ?
Night's sepulchre, the universal home,
Where weakness, strength, vice, virtue, sunk supine,
Alike in naked helplessness recline ;
Glad for awhile to heave unconscious breath,
Yet wake to wrestle with the dread of death,
And shun, though day but dawn on ills increased,
That sleep, the loveliest, since it dreams the least.

CANTO THE SECOND

I

NIGHT wanes—the vapours round the mountains curled,
Melt into morn, and Light awakes the world.
Man has another day to swell the past,
And lead him near to little, but his last ;
But mighty Nature bounds as from her birth,
The sun is in the heavens, and life on earth ;
Flowers in the valley, splendour in the beam,
Health on the gale, and freshness in the stream.
Immortal man ! behold her glories shine,
And cry, exulting inly, “ They are thine ! ”
Gaze on, while yet thy gladdened eye may see,
A morrow comes when they are not for thee ;
And grieve what may above thy senseless bier,
Nor earth nor sky will yield a single tear ;
Nor cloud shall gather more, nor leaf shall fall,
Nor gale breathe forth one sigh for thee, for all ;
But creeping things shall revel in their spoil,
And fit thy clay to fertilize the soil.

II

'Tis morn—'tis noon—assembled in the hall,
The gathered chieftains come to Otho's call :
'Tis now the promised hour, that must proclaim
The life or death of Lara's future fame ;
When Ezzelin his charge may here unfold,
And whatsoe'er the tale, it must be told.

His faith was pledged, and Lara's promise given,
To meet it in the eye of man and Heaven.
Why comes he not? Such truths to be divulged,
Methinks the accuser's rest is long indulged.

III

The hour is past, and Lara too is there,
With self-confiding, coldly patient air;
Why comes not Ezzelin? The hour is past,
And murmurs rise, and Otho's brow's o'ercast,
"I know my friend! his faith I can not fear,
If yet he be on earth, expect him here;
The roof that held him in the valley stands
Between my own and noble Lara's lands;
My halls from such a guest had honour gained,
Nor had Sir Ezzelin his host disdained,
But that some previous proof forbade his stay,
And urged him to prepare against to-day;
The word I pledged for his I pledge again,
Or will myself redeem his knighthood's stain."

He ceased—and Lara answered, "I am here
To lend at thy demand a listening ear,
To tales of evil from a stranger's tongue,
Whose words already might my heart have wrung,
But that I deemed him scarcely less than mad,
Or, at the worst, a foe ignobly bad.
I know him not—but me it seems he knew
In lands where—but I must not trifle too:
Produce this babbler—or redeem the pledge;
Here in thy hold, and with thy falchion's edge."

Proud Otho on the instant, reddening, threw
His glove on earth, and forth his sabre flew.
"The last alternative befits me best,
And thus I answer for mine absent guest."

With cheek unchanging from its sallow gloom,
However near his own or other's tomb;
With hand, whose almost careless coolness spoke
Its grasp well-used to deal the sabre-stroke;
With eye, though calm, determined not to spare,
Did Lara too his willing weapon bare.
In vain the circling chieftains round them closed,
For Otho's frenzy would not be opposed;
And from his lips those words of insult fell—
His sword is good who can maintain them well.

IV

Short was the conflict ; furious, blindly rash,
Vain Otho gave his bosom to the gash :
He bled, and fell ; but not with deadly wound,
Stretched by a dextrous sleight along the ground.
“ Demand thy life ! ” He answered not : and then
From that red floor he ne’er had risen again,
For Lara’s brow upon the moment grew
Almost to blackness in its demon hue ;
And fiercer shook his angry falchion now
Than when his foe’s was levelled at his brow ;
Then all was stern collectedness and art,
Now rose the unleavened hatred of his heart :
So little sparing to the foe he felled,
That when the approaching crowd his arm withheld,
He almost turned the thirsty point on those
Who thus for mercy dared to interpose ;
But to a moment’s thought that purpose bent ;
Yet looked he on him still with eye intent,
As if he loathed the ineffectual strife
That left a foe, howe’er o’erthrown, with life ;
As if to search how far the wound he gave
Had sent its victim onward to his grave.

V

They raised the bleeding Otho, and the leech
Forbade all present question, sign, and speech ;
The others met within a neighbouring hall,
And he, incensed and heedless of them all,
The cause and conqueror in this sudden fray,
In haughty silence slowly strode away ;
He backed his steed, his homeward path he took,
Nor cast on Otho’s tower a single look.

VI

But where was he ? that meteor of a night,
Who menaced but to disappear with light.
Where was this Ezzelin ? who came and went
To leave no other trace of his intent.
He left the dome of Otho long ere morn,
In darkness, yet so well the path was worn
He could not miss it : near his dwelling lay ;
But there he was not, and with coming day
Came fast inquiry, which unfolded naught
Except the absence of the chief it sought.
A chamber tenantless, a steed at rest,
His host alarmed, his murmuring squires distressed :

Their search extends along, around the path,
In dread to meet the marks of prowlers' wrath :
But none are there, and not a brake hath borne
Nor gout of blood, nor shred of mantle torn ;
Nor fall nor struggle hath defaced the grass,
Which still retains a mark where murder was ;
Nor dabbling fingers left to tell the tale,
The bitter print of each convulsive nail,
When agonized hands that cease to guard,
Wound in that pang the smoothness of the sword.
Some such had been, if here a life was reft,
But these were not ; and doubting hope is left ;
And strange suspicion, whispering Lara's name,
Now daily mutters o'er his blackened fame ;
Then sudden silent when his form appeared,
Awaits the absence of the thing it feared ;
Again its wonted wondering to renew,
And dye conjecture with a darker hue.

VII

Days roll along, and Otho's wounds are healed,
But not his pride ; and hate no more concealed :
He was a man of power, and Lara's foe,
The friend of all who sought to work him woe,
And from his country's justice now demands
Account of Ezzelin at Lara's hands.
Who else than Lara could have cause to fear
His presence ? who had made him disappear,
If not the man on whom his menaced charge
Had sate too deeply were he left at large ?
The general rumour ignorantly loud,
The mystery dearest to the curious crowd ;
The seeming friendlessness of him who strove
To win no confidence, and wake no love ;
The sweeping fierceness which his soul betrayed,
The skill with which he wielded his keen blade ;
Where had his arm unwarlike caught that art ?
Where had that fierceness grown upon his heart ?
For it was not the blind capricious rage
A word can kindle and a word assuage ;
But the deep working of a soul unmixed
With aught of pity where its wrath had fixed ;
Such as long power and overgorged success
Concentrates into all that's merciless :
These, linked with that desire which ever sways
Mankind, the rather to condemn than praise,
'Gainst Lara gathering raised at length a storm,

Such as himself might fear, and foes would form,
And he must answer for the absent head
Of one that haunts him still, alive or dead.

VIII

Within that land was many a malcontent,
Who cursed the tyranny to which he bent;
That soil full many a wringing despot saw,
Who worked his wantonness in form of law;
Long war without and frequent broil within
Had made a path for blood and giant sin,
That waited but a signal to begin
New havoc, such as civil discord blends,
Which knows no neuter, owns but foes or friends;
Fixed in his feudal fortress each was lord,
In word and deed obeyed, in soul abhorred.
Thus Lara had inherited his lands,
And with them pining hearts and sluggish hands;
But that long absence from his native clime
Had left him stainless of oppression's crime,
And now, diverted by his milder sway,
All dread by slow degrees had worn away;
The menials felt their usual awe alone,
But more for him than them that fear was grown;
They deemed him now unhappy, though at first
Their evil judgment augured of the worst,
And each long restless night, and silent mood,
Was traced to sickness, fed by solitude:
And though his lonely habits threw of late
Gloom o'er his chamber, cheerful was his gate;
For thence the wretched ne'er unsoothed withdrew,
For them, at least, his soul compassion knew.
Cold to the great, contemptuous to the high,
The humble passed not his unheeding eye;
Much he would speak not, but beneath his roof
They found asylum oft, and ne'er reproof.
And they who watched might mark that, day by day,
Some new retainers gathered to his sway;
But most of late, since Ezzelin was lost,
He played the courteous lord and bounteous host:
Perchance his strife with Otho made him dread
Some snare prepared for his obnoxious head;
Whate'er his view, his favour more obtains
With these, the people, than his fellow-thanes.
If this were policy, so far 'twas sound,
The million judged but of him as they found;
From him by sterner chiefs to exile driven

They but required a shelter, and 'twas given.
By him no peasant mourned his rifled cot,
And scarce the serf could murmur o'er his lot;
With him old avarice found its hoard secure,
With him contempt forbore to mock the poor;
Youth, present cheer, and promised recompense
Detained, till all too late to part from thence:
To hate he offered, with the coming change,
Too deep reversion of delayed revenge;
To love, long baffled by the unequal match,
The well-won charms success was sure to snatch.
All now was ripe, he waits but to proclaim
That slavery nothing which was still a name.
The moment came, the hour when Otho thought
Secure at last the vengeance which he sought:
His summons found the destined criminal
Begirt by thousands in his swarming hall,
Fresh from their feudal fetters newly riven,
Defying earth, and confident of heaven.
That morning he had freed the soil-bound slaves
Who dig no land for tyrants but their graves!
Such is their cry—some watchword for the fight
Must vindicate the wrong, and warp the right:
Religion—freedom—vengeance—what you will,
A word's enough to raise mankind to kill;
Some factious phrase by cunning caught and spread,
That guilt may reign, and wolves and worms be fed!

IX

Throughout that clime the feudal chiefs had gained
Such sway, their infant monarch hardly reigned;
Now was the hour for faction's rebel growth,
The serfs contemned the one, and hated both:
They waited but a leader, and they found
One to their cause inseparably bound;
By circumstance compelled to plunge again,
In self-defence, amidst the strife of men.
Cut off by some mysterious fate from those
Whom birth and nature meant not for his foes,
Had Lara from that night, to him accursed,
Prepared to meet, but not alone, the worst:
Some reason urged, whate'er it was, to shun
Inquiry into deeds at distance done;
By mingling with his own the cause of all,
E'en if he failed, he still delayed his fall.
The sullen calm that long his bosom kept,
The storm that once had spent itself and slept,

Roused by events that seemed foredoomed to urge
His gloomy fortunes to their utmost verge,
Burst forth, and made him all he once had been,
And is again; he only changed the scene.
Light care had he for life, and less for fame,
But not less fitted for the desperate game;
He deemed himself marked out for others' hate,
And mocked at ruin, so they shared his fate.
What cared he for the freedom of the crowd?
He raised the humble but to bend the proud.
He had hoped quiet in his sullen lair,
But man and destiny beset him there:
Inured to hunters, he was found at bay;
And they must kill, they can not snare the prey,
Stern, unambitious, silent he had been
Henceforth a calm spectator of life's scene;
But dragged again upon the arena, stood
A leader not unequal to the feud;
In voice—mien—gesture—savage nature spoke,
And from his eye the gladiator broke.

X

What boots the oft-repeated tale of strife,
The feast of vultures, and the waste of life?
The varying fortune or each separate field,
The fierce that vanquish, and the faint that yield?
Till smoking ruin, and the crumbled wall?
In this the struggle was the same with all;
Save that distempered passions lent their force
In bitterness that banished all remorse.
None sued, for Mercy knew her cry was vain,
The captive died upon the battle-slain:
In either cause, one rage alone possessed
The empire of the alternate victor's breast;
And they that smote for freedom or for sway,
Deemed few were slain, while more remained to slay.
It was too late to check the wasting brand,
And Desolation reaped the famished land;
The torch was lighted, and the flame was spread,
And Carnage smiled upon her daily bread.

XI

Fresh with the nerve the new-born impulse strung,
The first success to Lara's numbers clung:
But that vain victory hath ruined all;
They form no longer to their leader's call:
In blind confusion on the foe they press,

And think to snatch is to secure success.
The lust of booty, and the thirst of hate,
Lure on the broken brigands to their fate:
In vain he doth whate'er a chief may do,
To check the headlong fury of that crew;
In vain their stubborn ardour he would tame,
The hand that kindles can not quench the flame;
The wary foe alone hath turned their mood,
And shown their rashness to that erring brood;
The feigned retreat, the nightly ambushade,
The daily harass, and the fight delayed,
The long privation of the hoped supply,
The tentless rest beneath the humid sky,
The stubborn wall that mocks the leaguer's art,
And palls the patience of his baffled heart,
Of these they had not deemed: the battle-day
They could encounter as a veteran may;
But more preferred the fury of the strife,
And present death, to hourly suffering life:
And famine wrings, and fever sweeps away
His numbers melting fast from their array;
Intemperate triumph fades to discontent,
And Lara's soul alone seems still unbent:
But few remain to aid his voice and hand,
And thousands dwindled to a scanty band:
Desperate, though few, the last and best remained
To mourn the discipline they late disdained.
One hope survives, the frontier is not far,
And thence they may escape from native war;
And bear within them to the neighbouring state
An exile's sorrows, or an outlaw's hate:
Hard is the task their fatherland to quit,
But harder still to perish or submit.

XII

It is resolved—they march—consenting Night
Guides with her star their dim and torchless flight:
Already they perceive its tranquil beam
Sleep on the surface of the barrier stream:
Already they descry—Is yon the bank?
Away! 'tis lined with many a hostile rank.
Return or fly!—What glitters in the rear?
'Tis Otho's banner—the pursuer's spear!
Are those the shepherds' fires upon the height?
Alas! they blaze too widely for the flight:
Cut off from hope, and compassed in the toil,
Less blood, perchance, hath bought a richer spoil!

XIII

A moment's pause—'tis but to breathe their band,
Or shall they onward press, or here withstand?
It matters little—if they charge the foes
Who by their border-stream their march oppose,
Some few, perchance, may break and pass the line,
However linked to baffle such design.
"The charge be ours! to wait for their assault
Were fate well worthy of a coward's halt."
Forth flies each sabre, reined is every steed,
And the next word shall scarce outstrip the deed:
In the next tone of Lara's gathering breath
How many shall but hear the voice of death!

XIV

His blade is bared—in him there is an air
As deep, but far too tranquil for despair;
A something of indifference more than then
Becomes the bravest, if they feel for men.
He turned his eye on Kaled, ever near,
And still too faithful to betray one fear:
Perchance 'twas but the moon's dim twilight threw
Along his aspect an unwonted hue
Of mournful paleness, whose deep tint expressed
The truth, and not the terror of his breast.
This Lara marked, and laid his hand on his:
It trembled not in such an hour as this;
His lip was silent, scarcely beat his heart,
His eye alone proclaimed—

"We will not part!

Thy band may perish, or thy friends may flee,
Farewell to life, but not adieu to thee!"

The word hath passed his lips, and onward driven,
Pours the linked band through ranks asunder riven;
Well has each steed obeyed the armed heel,
And flash the scimitars, and rings the steel;
Outnumbered, not outbraved, they still oppose
Despair to daring, and a front to foes;
And blood is mingled with the dashing stream,
Which runs all redly till the morning beam.

XV

Commanding, aiding, animating all,
Where foe appeared to press, or friend to fall,
Cheers Lara's voice, and waves or strikes his steel,
Inspiring hope himself had ceased to feel.

None fled, for well they knew that flight were vain,
But those that waver turn to smite again,
While yet they find the firmest of the foe
Recoil before their leader's look and blow;
Now girt with numbers, now almost alone,
He foils their ranks, or reunites his own;
Himself he spared not—once they seemed to fly—
Now was the time, he waved his hand on high,
And shook— Why sudden droops that plumed crest?
The shaft is sped—the arrow's in his breast!
That fatal gesture left the unguarded side,
And Death hath stricken down yon arm of pride.
The word of triumph faded from his tongue;
That hand, so raised, how droopingly it hung!
But yet the sword instinctively retains,
Though from its fellow shrink the falling reins;
These Kaled snatches: dizzy with the blow,
And senseless bending o'er his saddle-bow
Perceives not Lara that his anxious page
Beguiles his charger from the combat's rage:
Meantime his followers charge and charge again;
Too mixed the slayers now to heed the slain!

XVI

Day glimmers on the dying and the dead,
The cloven cuirass, and the helmless head;
The war-horse masterless is on the earth,
And that last gasp hath burst his bloody girth;
And near, yet quivering with what life remained,
The heel that urged him, and the hand that reined:
And some too near that rolling torrent lie,
Whose waters mock the lip of those that die;
That panting thirst which scorches in the breath
Of those that die the soldier's fiery death,
In vain impels the burning mouth to crave
One drop—the last—to cool it for the grave;
With feeble and convulsive effort swept
Their limbs along the crimsoned turf have crept:
The faint remains of life such struggles waste,
But yet they reach the stream, and bend to taste:
They feel its freshness, and almost partake—
Why pause?—No further thirst have they to slake—
It is unquenched, and yet they feel it not—
It was an agony—but now forgot!

XVII

Beneath a lime, remoter from the scene,
Where but for him that strife had never been,

A breathing but devoted warrior lay :
'Twas Lara bleeding fast from life away.
His follower once, and now his only guide,
Kneels Kaled watchful o'er his welling side,
And with his scarf would stanch the tides that rush
With each convulsion in a blacker gush ;
And then, as his faint breathing waxes low,
In feebler, not less fatal tricklings flow :
He scarce can speak, but motions him 'tis vain,
And merely adds another throb to pain.
He clasps the hand that pang which would assuage,
And sadly smiles his thanks to that dark page,
Who nothing fears, nor feels, nor heeds, nor sees,
Save that damp brow which rests upon his knees ;
Save that pale aspect, where the eyes, though dim,
Held all the light that shone on earth for him.

XVIII

The foe arrives, who long had searched the field,
Their triumph naught till Lara too should yield ;
They would remove him, but they see 'twere vain,
And he regards them with a calm disdain,
That rose to reconcile him with his fate,
And that escape to death from living hate :
And Otho comes, and leaping from his steed,
Looks on the bleeding foe that made him bleed,
And questions of his state ; he answers not,
Scarce glances on him as on one forgot,
And turns to Kaled :—each remaining word,
They understood not, if distinctly heard ;
His dying tones are in that other tongue,
To which some strange remembrance wildly clung.
They spake of other scenes, but what—is known
To Kaled, whom their meaning reached alone ;
And he replied, though faintly, to their sound,
While gazed the rest in dumb amazement round :
They seemed even then—that twain—unto the last
To half forget the present in the past ;
To share between themselves some separate fate,
Whose darkness none beside should penetrate.

XIX

Their words though faint were many—from the tone
Their import those who heard could judge alone ;
From this, you might have deemed young Kaled's death
More near than Lara's by his voice and breath,
So sad, so deep, and hesitating broke

The accents his scarce-moving pale lips spoke;
But Lara's voice, though low, at first was clear
And calm, till murmuring death gasped hoarsely near:
But from his visage little could we guess,
So unrepentant, dark, and passionless,
Save that when struggling nearer to his last,
Upon that page his eye was kindly cast;
And once, as Kaled's answering accents ceased,
Rose Lara's hand, and pointed to the East:
Whether (as then the breaking sun from high
Rolled back the clouds) the morrow caught his eye,
Or that 'twas chance, or some remembered scene
That raised his arm to point where such had been,
Scarce Kaled seemed to know, but turned away,
As if his heart abhorred that coming day,
And shrunk his glance before that morning light
To look on Lara's brow—where all grew night.
Yet sense seemed left, though better were its loss;
For when one near displayed the absolving cross,
And proffered to his touch the holy bead,
Of which his parting soul might own the need,
He looked upon it with an eye profane,
And smiled—Heaven pardon! if 'twere with disdain;
And Kaled, though he spoke not, nor withdrew
From Lara's face his fixed despairing view,
With brow repulsive, and with gesture swift,
Flung back the hand which held the sacred gift,
As if such but disturbed the expiring man,
Nor seemed to know his life but then began,
The life immortal, infinite, secure,
To all for whom that cross hath made it sure!

XX

But gasping heaved the breath that Lara drew,
And dull the film along his dim eye grew;
His limbs stretched fluttering, and his head drooped o'er
The weak yet still untiring knee that bore;
He pressed the hand he held upon his heart—
It beats no more, but Kaled will not part
With the cold grasp, but feels, and feels in vain,
For that faint throb which answers not again.
“It beats!”—Away, thou dreamer! he is gone—
It once was Lara which thou look'st upon.

XXI

He gazed, as if not yet had passed away
The haughty spirit of that humble clay;

And those around have roused him from his trance,
But can not tear from thence his fixed glance ;
And when in raising him from where he bore
Within his arms the form that felt no more,
He saw the head his breast would still sustain,
Roll down like earth to earth upon the plain ;
He did not dash himself thereby, nor tear
The glossy tendrils of his raven hair,
But strove to stand and gaze, but reeled and fell,
Scarce breathing more than that he loved so well.
Than that he loved ! Oh ! never yet beneath
The breast of man such trusty love may breathe !
That trying moment hath at once revealed
The secret long and yet but half concealed ;
In baring to revive that lifeless breast,
Its grief seemed ended, but the sex confessed ;
And life returned, and Kaled felt no shame—
What now to her was womanhood or fame ?

XXII

And Lara sleeps not where his fathers sleep,
But where he died his grave was dug as deep ;
Nor is his mortal slumber less profound,
Though priest nor blessed, nor marble decked the mound ;
And he was mourned by one whose quiet grief,
Less loud, outlasts a people's for their chief.
Vain was all question asked her of the past,
And vain e'en menace—silent to the last ;
She told nor whence nor why she left behind
Her all for one who seemed but little kind.
Why did she love him ? Curious fool !—be still—
Is human love the growth of human will ?
To her he might be gentleness ; the stern
Have deeper thoughts than your dull eyes discern,
And when they love, your smilers guess not how
Beats the strong heart, though less the lips avow.
They were not common links that formed the chain
That bound to Lara Kaled's heart and brain ;
But that wild tale she brooked not to unfold,
And sealed is now each lip that could have told.

XXIII

They laid him in the earth, and on his breast,
Besides the wound that sent his soul to rest,
They found the scattered dints of many a scar
Which were not planted there in recent war :
Where'er had passed his summer years of life,

It seems they vanished in a land of strife;
But all unknown his glory or his guilt,
These only told that somewhere blood was spilt,
And Ezzelin, who might have spoke the past,
Returned no more—that night appeared his last.

XXIV

Upon that night (a peasant's is the tale)
A Serf that crossed the intervening vale,
When Cynthia's light almost gave way to morn,
And nearly veiled in mist her waning horn;
A Serf, that rose betimes to thread the wood,
And hew the bough that bought his children's food,
Passed by the river that divides the plain
Of Otho's lands and Lara's broad domain;
He heard a tramp—a horse and horseman broke
From out the wood—before him was a cloak
Wrapped round some burthen at his saddle-bow,
Bent was his head, and hidden was his brow.
Roused by the sudden sight at such a time,
And some foreboding that it might be crime,
Himself unheeded watched the stranger's course,
Who reached the river, bounded from his horse,
And lifting thence the burthen which he bore,
Heaved up the bank, and dashed it from the shore,³
Then paused, and looked, and turned, and seemed to watch,
And still another hurried glance would snatch,
And follow with his step the stream that flowed,
As if even yet too much its surface showed:
At once he started, stooped, around him strewn
The winter floods had scattered heaps of stone;
Of these the heaviest thence he gathered there,
And slung them with a more than common care.
Meantime the Serf had crept to where unseen
Himself might safely mark what this might mean.
He caught a glimpse, as of a floating breast,
And something glittered starlike on the vest,
But ere he well could mark the buoyant trunk,
A massy fragment smote it, and it sunk:
It rose again, but indistinct to view,
And left the waters of a purple hue,
Then deeply disappeared: the horseman gazed
Till ebb'd the latest eddy it had raised;
Then turning, vaulted on his pawing steed,
And instant spurred him into panting speed.
His face was masked—the features of the dead,
If dead it were, escaped the observer's dread;

But if in sooth a star its bosom bore,
Such is the badge that knighthood ever wore,
And such 'tis known Sir Ezzelin had worn
Upon the night that led to such a morn.
If thus he perished, Heaven receive his soul !
His undiscovered limbs to ocean roll ;
And charity upon the hope would dwell
It was not Lara's hand by which he fell.

XXV

And Kaled—Lara—Ezzelin, are gone,
Alike without their monumental stone !
The first, all efforts vainly strove to wean
From lingering where her chieftain's blood had been ;
Grief had so tamed a spirit once too proud,
Her tears were few, her wailing never loud ;
But furious would you tear her from the spot
Where yet she scarce believed that he was not,
Her eye shot forth with all the living fire
That haunts the tigress in her whelpless ire ;
But left to waste her weary moments there,
She talked all idly unto shapes of air,
Such as the busy brain of Sorrow paints,
And woos to listen to her fond complaints ;
And she would sit beneath the very tree,
Where lay his drooping head upon her knee ;
And in that posture where she saw him fall,
His words, his looks, his dying grasp recall ;
And she had shorn, but saved her raven hair,
And oft would snatch it from her bosom there,
And fold and press it gently to the ground,
As if she stanch'd anew some phantom's wound.
Herself would question, and for him reply ;
Then rising, start, and beckon him to fly
From some imagined spectre in pursuit ;
Then seat her down upon some linden's root,
And hide her visage with her meagre hand,
Or trace strange characters along the sand.—
This could not last—she lies by him she loved ;
Her tale untold—her truth too dearly proved.

NOTES

¹ The reader of "Lara" may probably regard it as a sequel to a poem ("The Corsair") that recently appeared ; whether the cast of the hero's character, the turn of his adventures, and the general outline and colouring of the story may not encourage such a supposition, shall be left to his determination.

* The reader is apprized that the name only of Lara being Spanish, and no circumstances of local or national description fixing the scene or hero of the poem to any country or age, the word "Serf," which could not be correctly applied to the lower classes in Spain, who were never vassals of the soil, has nevertheless been employed to designate the followers of our fictitious chieftain.

* The event in this section was suggested by the description of the death, or rather burial, of the Duke of Gandia. The most interesting and particular account of it is given by Burchard, and is in substance as follows: "On the eighth day of June, the Cardinal of Valenza and the Duke of Gandia, sons of the Pope, supped with their mother, Vanozza, near the church of S. Pietro ad vincula, several other persons being present at the entertainment. A late hour approaching, and the cardinal having reminded his brother that it was time to return to the apostolic palace, they mounted their horses or mules, with only a few attendants, and proceeded together as far as the palace of Cardinal Ascanio Sforza, when the duke informed the cardinal that, before he returned home, he had to pay a visit of pleasure. Dismissing therefore all his attendants—excepting his staffiero, or footman, and a person in a mask, who had paid him a visit while at supper, and who, during the space of a month or thereabouts previous to this time, had called upon him almost daily at the apostolic palace—he took this person behind him on his mule, and proceeded to the street of the Jews, where he quitted his servant, directing him to remain there until a certain hour, when, if he did not return, he might repair to the palace. The duke then seated the person in the mask behind him, and rode, I know not whither; but in that night he was assassinated and thrown into the river. The servant, after having been dismissed, was also assaulted and mortally wounded; and although he was attended with great care, yet such was his situation that he could give no intelligible account of what had befallen his master. In the morning, the duke not having returned to the palace, his servants began to be alarmed, and one of them informed the pontiff of the evening excursion of his sons and that the duke had not yet made his appearance. This gave the Pope no small anxiety; but he conjectured that the duke had been attracted by some courtesan to pass the night with her, and, not choosing to quit the house in open day, had waited till the following evening to return home. When, however, the evening arrived, and he found himself disappointed in his expectations, he became deeply afflicted, and began to make inquiries from different persons, whom he ordered to attend him for that purpose. Among these was a man named Giorgio Schiavoni, who, having discharged some timber from a bark in the river, had remained on board the vessel to watch it; and being interrogated whether he had seen any one thrown into the river on the night preceding, he replied that he saw two men on foot, who came down the street and looked diligently about to observe whether any person was passing. That seeing no one, they returned, and a short time afterward two others came and looked around in the same manner as the former: no person still appearing, they gave a sign to their companions, when a man came, mounted on a white horse, having behind him a dead body, the head and arms of which hung on one side, and the feet on the other side of the horse, the two persons on foot supporting the body to prevent its falling. They thus proceeded toward that part where the filth of the city is usually discharged into the river, and turning the horse, with his tail toward the water, the two persons took the dead body by the arms and feet, and with all their strength flung it into the river. The person on horseback then asked if they had thrown it in; to which they replied, 'Signor, si' (Yes, sir). He then looked toward the river, and, seeing a mantle floating on the stream, he inquired what it was that appeared black; to

which they answered it was a mantle; and one of them threw stones upon it, in consequence of which it sunk. The attendants of the pontiff then inquired from Giorgio why he had not revealed this to the governor of the city; to which he replied that he had seen in his time a hundred dead bodies thrown into the river at the same place, without any inquiry being made respecting them; and that he had not, therefore, considered it as a matter of any importance. The fishermen and seamen were then collected and ordered to search the river, where, on the following evening, they found the body of the duke, with his habit entire, and thirty ducats in his purse. He was pierced with nine wounds, one of which was in his throat, the others in his head, body, and limbs. No sooner was the pontiff informed of the death of his son, and that he had been thrown, like filth, into the river, than, giving way to his grief, he shut himself up in a chamber and wept bitterly. The Cardinal of Segovia, and other attendants on the pope, went to the door and, after many hours spent in persuasions and exhortations, prevailed upon him to admit them. From the evening of Wednesday till the following Saturday the Pope took no food; nor did he sleep from Thursday morning till the same hour on the ensuing day. At length, however, giving way to the entreaties of his attendants, he began to restrain his sorrow and to consider the injury which his own health might sustain by the further indulgence of his grief."

THE SIEGE OF CORINTH

TO JOHN HOBHOUSE, ESQ.,

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED BY HIS FRIEND.

January 22, 1816.

ADVERTISEMENT

"THE grand army of the Turks, in 1715, under the Prime Vizier, to open to themselves a way into the heart of the Morea, and to form the siege of Napoli di Romania, the most considerable place in all that country,* thought it best in the first place to attack Corinth, upon which they made several storms. The garrison being weakened, and the governor seeing it was impossible to hold out against so mighty a force, thought it best to beat a parley; but while they were treating about the articles one of the magazines in the Turkish army, wherein they had six hundred barrels of powder, blew up by accident, whereby six or seven hundred men were killed; which so enraged the infidels that they would not grant any capitulation, but stormed the place with so much fury that they took it and put most of the garrison, with Signior Minotti, the governor, to the sword. The rest, with Antonio Bembo, provveditor extraordinary, were made prisoners of war."—History of the Turks.

I

MANY a vanished year and age,
And tempest's breath, and battle's rage,
Have swept o'er Corinth; yet she stands
A fortress formed to Freedom's hands.

* Napoli di Romania is not now the most considerable place in the Morea, but Tripolitza, where the Pacha resides and maintains his government. Napoli is near Argos. I visited all three in 1810-'11; and in the course of journeying through the country from my first arrival, in 1809, I crossed the isthmus eight times in my way from Attica to the Morea, over the mountains, or in the other direction, when passing from the Gulf of Athens to that of Lepanto. Both the routes are picturesque and beautiful, though very different: that by sea has more sameness; but the voyage, being always within sight of land, and often very near it, presents many attractive views of the islands Salamis, Ægina, Poro, etc., and the coast of the continent.

The whirlwind's wrath, the earthquake's shock
Have left untouched her hoary rock,
The keystone of a land, which still,
Though fallen, looks proudly on that hill,
The landmark to the double tide
That purpling rolls on either side,
As if their waters chafed to meet,
Yet pause and crouch beneath her feet.
But could the blood before her shed
Since first Timoleon's brother bled,
Or baffled Persia's despot fled,
Arise from out the earth which drank
The stream of slaughter as it sank,
That sanguine ocean would o'erflow
Her isthmus idly spread below :
Or could the bones of all the slain,
Who perished there, be piled again,
That rival pyramid would rise
More mountain-like, through those clear skies,
Than yon tower-capped Acropolis,
Which seems the very clouds to kiss.

II

On dun Cithæron's ridge appears
The gleam of twice ten thousand spears ;
And downward to the Isthmian plain,
From shore to shore of either main,
The tent is pitched, the crescent shines
Along the Moslem's leaguering lines ;
And the dusk Spahi's bands advance
Beneath each bearded pacha's glance ;
And far and wide as eye can reach
The turbaned cohorts throng the beach ;
And there the Arab's camel kneels,
And there his steed the 'Tartar wheels ;
The 'Turcoman hath left his herd,¹
The sabre round his loins to gird ;
And there the volleying thunders pour,
Till waves grow smoother to the roar.
The trench is dug, the cannon's breath
Wings the far-hissing globe of death ;
Fast whirl the fragments from the wall,
Which crumbles with the ponderous ball ;
And from that wall the foe replies,
O'er dusty plain and smoky skies,
With fires that answer fast and well
The summons of the Infidel.

III

But near and nearest to the wall
 Of those who wish and work its fall,
 With deeper skill in war's black art
 Than Othman's sons, and high of heart
 As any chief that ever stood
 Triumphant in the fields of blood;
 From post to post, and deed to deed,
 Fast spurring on his reeking steed,
 Where sallying ranks the trench assail,
 And make the foremost Moslem quail;
 Or where the battery, guarded well,
 Remains as yet impregnable,
 Alighting cheerly to inspire
 The soldier slackening in his fire;
 The first and freshest of the host
 Which Stamboul's Sultan there can boast,
 To guide the follower o'er the field,
 To point the tube, the lance to wield,
 Or whirl around the bickering blade—
 Was Alp, the Adrian renegade.

IV

From Venice—once a race of worth
 His gentle sires—he drew his birth;
 But late an exile from her shore,
 Against his countrymen he bore
 The arms they taught to bear; and now
 The turban girt his shaven brow.
 Through many a change had Corinth passed
 With Greece to Venice' rule at last;
 And here, before her walls, with those
 To Greece and Venice equal foes,
 He stood a foe, with all the zeal
 Which young and fiery converts feel,
 Within whose heated bosom throngs
 The memory of a thousand wrongs.
 To him had Venice ceased to be
 Her ancient civic boast—"the Free";
 And in the palace of St. Mark
 Unnamed accusers in the dark
 Within the "Lion's mouth" had placed
 A charge against him uneffaced:
 He fled in time, and saved his life,
 To waste his future years in strife,
 That taught his land how great her loss
 In him who triumphed o'er the Cross,

'Gainst which he reared the Crescent high,
And battled to avenge or die.

V

Coumourgi—he whose closing scene²
Adorned the triumph of Eugene,
When on Carlowitz' bloody plain,
The last and mightiest of the slain,
He sank, regretting not to die,
But cursed the Christian's victory—
Coumourgi—can his glory cease,
That latest conqueror of Greece,
Till Christian hands to Greece restore
The freedom Venice gave of yore?
A hundred years have rolled away
Since he refixed the Moslem's sway,
And now he led the Mussulman,
And gave the guidance of the van
To Alp, who well repaid the trust
By cities levelled with the dust;
And proved, by many a deed of death,
How firm his heart in novel faith.

VI

The walls grew weak; and fast and hot
Against them poured the ceaseless shot,
With unabating fury sent,
From battery to battlement;
And thunder-like the pealing din
Rose from each heated culverin;
And here and there some crackling dome
Was fired before the exploding bomb:
And as the fabric sank beneath
The shattering shell's volcanic breath,
In red and weathing columns flashed
The flame, as loud the ruin crashed,
Or into countless meteors driven,
Its earth-stars melted into heaven;
Whose clouds that day grew doubly dun,
Impervious to the hidden sun,
With volumed smoke that slowly grew
To one wide sky of sulphurous hue.

VII

But not for vengeance, long delayed,
Alone, did Alp, the renegade,
The Moslem warriors sternly teach

His skill to pierce the promised breach :
 Within those walls a maid was pent
 His hope would win, without consent
 Of that inexorable sire,
 Whose heart refused him in its ire,
 When Alp, beneath his Christian name,
 Her virgin hand aspired to claim.
 In happier mood, and earlier time,
 While unimpeached for traitorous crime,
 Gayest in gondola or hall,
 He glittered through the Carnival;
 And tuned the softest serenade
 That e'er on Adria's waters played
 At midnight to Italian maid.

VIII

And many deemed her heart was won :
 For sought by numbers, given to none,
 Had young Francesca's hand remained
 Still by the church's bonds unchained :
 And when the Adriatic bore
 Lanciotto to the Paynim shore,
 Her wonted smiles were seen to fail,
 And pensive waxed the maid and pale;
 More constant at confessional,
 More rare at masque and festival;
 Or seen at such with downcast eyes,
 Which conquered hearts they ceased to prize;
 With listless look she seems to gaze;
 With humbler care her form arrays;
 Her voice less lively in the song;
 Her step, though light, less fleet among
 The pairs, on whom the Morning's glance
 Breaks, yet unsated with the dance.

IX

Sent by the state to guard the land,
 (Which, wrested from the Moslem's hand,
 While Sobieski tamed his pride
 By Buda's wall and Danube's side,
 The chiefs of Venice wrung away
 From Patra to Eubœa's bay),
 Minotti held in Corinth's towers
 The Doge's delegated powers,
 While yet the pitying eye of Peace
 Smiled o'er her long-forgotten Greece :
 And ere that faithless truce was broke

Which freed her from the unchristian yoke,
With him his gentle daughter came ;
Nor there, since Menelaus' dame
Forsook her lord and land, to prove
What woes await on lawless love,
Had fairer form adorned the shore
Than she, the matchless stranger, bore.

X

The wall is rent, the ruins yawn,
And, with to-morrow's earliest dawn,
O'er the disjointed mass shall vault
The foremost of the fierce assault.
The bands are ranked ; the chosen van
Of Tartar and of Mussulman,
The full of hope, misnamed "forlorn,"
Who hold the thought of death in scorn,
And win their way with falchion's force,
Or pave the path with many a corse,
O'er which the following brave may rise,
Their stepping-stone—the last who dies !

XI

'Tis midnight : on the mountains brown
The cold, round moon shines deeply down !
Blue roll the waters, blue the sky
Spreads like an ocean hung on high,
Bespangled with those isles of light,
So wildly, spiritually bright ;
Who ever gazed upon them shining,
And turned to earth without repining,
Nor wished for wings to flee away,
And mix with their eternal ray ?
The waves on either shore lay there,
Calm, clear, and azure as the air ;
And scarce their foam the pebbles shook,
But murmured meekly as the brook.
The winds were pillowed on the waves ;
The banners drooped along their staves,
And, as they fell around them furling,
Above them shone the crescent curling ;
And that deep silence was unbroke,
Save where the watch his signal spoke,
Save where the steed neighed oft and shrill,
And echo answered from the hill,
And the wide hum of that wild host,
Rustled like leaves from coast to coast,

As rose the Muezzin's voice in air
In midnight call to wonted prayer ;
It rose, that chanted, mournful strain,
Like some lone spirit's o'er the plain :
'Twas musical, but sadly sweet,
Such as when winds and harp-strings meet,
And take a long unmeasured tone,
To mortal minstrelsy unknown.
It seemed to those within the wall
A cry prophetic of their fall :
It struck even the besieger's ear
With something ominous and drear,
An undefined and sudden thrill,
Which makes the heart a moment still,
Then beat with quicker pulse, ashamed
Of that strange sense its silence framed :
Such as a sudden passing-bell
Wakes, though but for a stranger's knell.

XII

The tent of Alp was on the shore ;
The sound was hushed, the prayer was o'er ;
The watch was set, the night-round made,
All mandates issued and obeyed :
'Tis but another anxious night,
His pains the morrow may requite
With all revenge and love can pay,
In guerdon for their long delay.
Few hours remain, and he hath need
Of rest, to nerve for many a deed
Of slaughter ; but within his soul
The thoughts like troubled waters roll.
He stood alone among the host ;
Not his the loud fanatic boast
To plant the Crescent o'er the Cross,
Or risk a life with little loss,
Secure in Paradise to be
By Houris loved immortally :
Nor his, what burning patriots feel,
The stern exaltedness of zeal,
Profuse of blood, untired in toil,
When battling on the parent soil.
He stood alone—a renegade
Against the country he betrayed.
He stood alone amidst his band,
Without a trusted heart or hand :
They followed him, for he was brave,

MOONLIGHT.

Photogravure from a painting by Bruce Horsfall.

'Tis midnight, on the mountains brown
The cold, round moon shines deeply down!
Blue roll the waters, blue the sky
Spreads like an ocean hung on high.

The waves on either side are there,
Calm, clear, and deep as the air;
And scarce their foam is ever shook,
But murmured melody is the rock.

The Siege of Corinth, XII.





And great the spoil he got and gave;
They crouched to him, for he had skill
To warp and wield the vulgar will:
But still his Christian origin
With them was little less than sin.
They envied even the faithless fame
He earned beneath a Moslem name:
Since he, their mightiest chief, had been
In youth, a bitter Nazarene.
They did not know how pride can stoop,
When baffled feelings withering droop;
They did not know how hate can burn
In hearts once changed from soft to stern;
Nor all the false and fatal zeal
The convert of revenge can feel.
He ruled them—man may rule the worst;
By ever daring to be first:
So lions o'er the jackal sway;
The jackal points, he fells the prey,
Then on the vulgar yelling press,
To gorge the relics of success.

XIII

His head grows fevered, and his pulse
The quick successive throbs convulse;
In vain from side to side he throws
His form, in courtship of repose;
Or if he dozed, a sound, a start
Awoke him with a sunken heart.
The turban on his hot brow pressed,
The mail weighed lead-like on his breast,
Though oft and long beneath its weight
Upon his eyes had slumber sate,
Without or couch or canopy,
Except a rougher field and sky
Than now might yield a warrior's bed,
Than now along the heaven was spread.
He could not rest, he could not stay
Within his tent to wait for day,
But walked him forth along the sand,
Where thousand sleepers strewed the strand.
What pillowed them? and why should he
More wakeful than the humblest be?
Since more their peril, worse their toil,
And yet they fearless dream of spoil;
While he alone, where thousands passed
A night of sleep, perchance their last,

In sickly vigil wandered on,
And envied all he gazed upon.

XIV

He felt his soul become more light
Beneath the freshness of the night.
Cool was the silent sky, though calm,
And bathed his brow with airy balm :
Behind, the camp—before him lay,
In many a winding creek and bay,
Lepanto's gulf ; and on the brow
Of Delphi's hill, unshaken snow,
High and eternal, such as shone
Through thousand summers brightly gone,
Along the gulf, the mount, the clime ;
It will not melt, like man, to time :
Tyrant and slave are swept away,
Less formed to wear before the ray ;
But that white veil, the lightest, frailest,
Which on the mighty mount thou hailest,
While tower and tree are torn and rent,
Shines o'er its craggy battlement ;
In form a peak, in height a cloud,
In texture like a hovering shroud,
Thus high by parting Freedom spread,
As from her fond abode she fled,
And lingered on the spot, where long
Her prophet spirit spake in song.
Oh ! still her step at moments falters
O'er withered fields and ruined altars,
And fain would wake in souls too broken,
By pointing to each glorious token.
But vain her voice, till better days
Dawn in those yet remembered rays,
Which shone upon the Persian flying,
And saw the Spartan smile in dying.

XV

Not mindless of these mighty times
Was Alp, despite his flight and crimes ;
And through this night, as on he wandered,
And o'er the past and present pondered,
And thought upon the glorious dead
Who there in better cause had bled,
He felt how faint and feebly dim
The fame that could accrue to him,
Who cheered the band, and waved the sword

A traitor in a turbaned horde;
 And led them to the lawless siege,
 Whose best success were sacrilege.
 Not so had those his fancy numbered,
 The chiefs whose dust around him slumbered;
 Their phalanx marshalled on the plain,
 Whose bulwarks were not then in vain.
 They fell devoted, but undying;
 The very gale their names seemed sighing:
 The waters murmured of their name;
 The woods were peopled with their fame;
 The silent pillar, lone and gray,
 Claimed kindred with their sacred clay;
 Their spirits wrapped the dusky mountain,
 Their memory sparkled o'er the fountain;
 The meanest rill, the mightiest river,
 Rolled mingling with their fame forever.
 Despite of every yoke she bears,
 That land is glory's still, and theirs!
 'Tis still a watchword to the earth:
 When man would do a deed of worth
 He points to Greece, and turns to tread,
 So sanctioned, on the tyrant's head:
 He looks to her, and rushes on
 Where life is lost, or freedom won.

XVI

Still by the shore Alp mutely mused,
 And wooed the freshness night diffused.
 There shrinks no ebb in that tideless sea,³
 Which changeless rolls eternally;
 So that wildest of waves, in their angriest mood,
 Scarce break on the bounds of the land for a rood;
 And the powerless moon beholds them flow,
 Heedless if she come or go:
 Calm or high, in main or bay,
 On their course she hath no sway.
 The rock unworn its base doth bare,
 And looks o'er the surf, but it comes not there;
 And the fringe of the foam may be seen below,
 On the line that it left long ages ago:
 A smooth short space of yellow sand
 Between it and the greener land.

He wandered on, along the beach,
 Till within the range of a carbine's reach
 Of the leaguered wall; but they saw him not,

Or how could he 'scape from the hostile shot,
Did traitors lurk in the Christian's hold?
Were their hands grown stiff, or their hearts waxed cold
I know not, in sooth; but from yonder wall
There flashed no fire, and there hissed no ball,
Though he stood beneath the bastion's frown,
That flanked the seaward gate of the town;
Though he heard the sound, and could almost tell
The sullen words of the sentinel,
As his measured step on the stone below
Clanked, as he paced it to and fro;
And he saw the lean dogs beneath the wall
Hold o'er the dead their carnival,
Gorging and growling o'er carcass and limb!
They were too busy to bark at him!
From a Tartar's skull they had stripped the flesh,
As ye peel the fig when its fruit is fresh;
And their white tusks crunched o'er the whiter skull,⁴
As it slipped through their jaws, when their edge grew dull,
As they lazily mumbled the bones of the dead,
When they scarce could rise from the spot where they fed;
So well had they broken a lingering fast
With those who had fallen for that night's repast.
And Alp knew, by the turbans that rolled on the sand,
The foremost of these were the best of his band:
Crimson and green were the shawls of their wear,
And each scalp had a single long tuft of hair,⁵
All the rest was shaven and bare.
The scalps were in the wild-dog's maw,
The hair was tangled round his jaw.
But close by the shore, on the edge of the gulf,
There sat a vulture flapping a wolf,
Who had stolen from the hills, but kept away,
Scared by the dogs, from the human prey;
But he seized on his share of a steed that lay,
Picked by the birds, on the sands of the bay.

XVII

Alp turned him from the sickening sight:
Never had shaken his nerves in fight;
But he better could brook to behold the dying,
Deep in the tide of their warm blood lying,
Scorched with the death-thirst, and writhing in vain,
Than the perishing dead who are past all pain.
There is something of pride in the perilous hour,
Whate'er be the shape in which death may lower;
For Fame is there to say who bleeds,

And Honour's eye on daring deeds!
But when all is past, it is humbling to tread
O'er the weltering field of the tombless dead,
And see worms of the earth, and fowls of the air,
Beasts of the forest, all gathering there;
All regarding man as their prey,
All rejoicing in his decay.

XVIII

There is a temple in ruin stands,
Fashioned by long-forgotten hands;
Two or three columns, and many a stone,
Marble and granite, with grass o'ergrown!
Out upon Time! it will leave no more
Of the things to come than the things before!
Out upon Time! who forever will leave
But enough of the past for the future to grieve
O'er that which hath been, and o'er that which must be:
What we have seen, our sons shall see;
Remnants of things that have passed away,
Fragments of stone, reared by creatures of clay!

XIX

He sate him down at a pillar's base,
And passed his hand athwart his face;
Like one in dreary musing mood,
Declining was his attitude;
His head was drooping on his breast,
Fevered, throbbing, and oppressed;
And o'er his brow, so downward bent,
Oft his beating fingers went,
Hurriedly, as you may see
Your own run over the ivory key,
Ere the measured tone is taken,
By the chords you would awaken.
There he sate all heavily,
As he heard the night-wind sigh.
Was it the wind, through some hollow stone,⁶
Sent that soft and tender moan?
He lifted his head, and he looked on the sea,
But it was unrippled as glass may be;
He looked on the long grass—it waved not a blade;
How was that gentle sound conveyed?
He looked to the banners—each flag lay still,
So did the leaves on Cithæron's hill,
And he felt not a breath come over his cheek;
What did that sudden sound bespeak?

He turned to the left—is he sure of sight?
There sate a lady, youthful and bright!

XX

He started up with more of fear
Than if an armed foe were near.
“God of my fathers! what is here?
Who art thou, and wherefore sent
So near a hostile armament?”
His trembling hands refused to sign
The cross he deemed no more divine:
He had resumed it in that hour,
But conscience wrung away the power.
He gazed—he saw: he knew the face
Of beauty, and the form of grace;
It was Francesca by his side,
The maid who might have been his bride!

The rose was yet upon her cheek,
But mellowed with a tenderer streak:
Where was the play of her soft lips fled?
Gone was the smile that enlivened their red.
The ocean's calm within their view,
Beside her eye had less of blue;
But like that cold wave it stood still,
And its glance, though clear, was chill.
Around her form a thin robe twining,
Naught concealed her bosom shining;
Through the parting of her hair,
Floating darkly downward there,
Her rounded arm showed white and bare:
And ere yet she made reply,
Once she raised her hand on high;
It was so wan and transparent of hue,
You might have seen the moon shine through.

XXI

“I come from my rest to him I love best,
That I may be happy, and he may be blest.
I have passed the guards, the gate, the wall;
Sought thee in safety through foes and all.
'Tis said the lion will turn and flee
From a maid in the pride of her purity;
And the Power on high, that can shield the good
Thus from the tyrant of the wood,
Hath extended its mercy to guard me as well
From the hands of the leaguering infidel.

I come—and if I come in vain,
Never, oh never, we meet again !
Thou hast done a fearful deed
In falling away from thy father's creed :
But dash that turban to earth, and sign
The sign of the cross, and forever be mine :
Wring the black drop from thy heart,
And to-morrow unites us no more to part."

"And where should our bridal-couch be spread ?
In the midst of the dying and the dead ?
For to-morrow we give to the slaughter and flame
The sons and the shrines of the Christian name.
None, save thou and thine, I've sworn,
Shall be left upon the morn :
But thee will I bear to a lovely spot,
Where our hands shall be joined, and our sorrow forgot.
There thou yet shall be my bride,
When once again I've quelled the pride
Of Venice : and her hated race
Have felt the arm they would debase
Scourge, with a whip of scorpions, those
Whom vice and envy made my foes."

Upon his hand she laid her own—
Light was the touch, but it thrilled to the bone,
And shot a chillness to his heart,
Which fixed him beyond the power to start.
Though slight was that grasp so mortal cold,
He could not loose him from its hold :
But never did clasp of one so dear
Strike on the pulse with such feeling of fear,
As those thin fingers, long and white,
Froze through his blood by their touch that night.
The feverish glow of his brow was gone,
And his heart sank so still that it felt like stone,
As he looked on the face, and beheld its hue,
So deeply changed from what he knew :
Fair but faint—without the ray
Of mind, that made each feature play
Like sparkling waves on a sunny day ;
And her motionless lips lay still as death,
And her words came forth without her breath,
And there rose not a heave o'er her bosom's swell,
And there seemed not a pulse in her veins to dwell.
Though her eye shone out, yet the lids were fixed,
And the glance that it gave was wild and unmixed

With aught of change, as the eyes may seem
 Of the restless who walk in a troubled dream;
 Like the figures on arras, that gloomily glare,
 Stirred by the breath of the wintry air,
 So seen by the dying lamp's fitful light,
 Lifeless, but life-like, and awful to sight;
 As they seem, through the dimness, about to come down
 From the shadowy wall where their images frown;
 Fearfully flitting to and fro,
 As the gusts on the tapestry come and go.

"If not for the love of me be given
 Thus much, then, for the love of Heaven—
 Again I say—that turban tear
 From off thy faithless brow, and swear
 Thine injured country's son to spare,
 Or thou art lost; and never shalt see—
 Not earth—that's past—but heaven or me.
 If this thou dost accord, albeit
 A heavy doom 'tis thine to meet,
 That doom shall half absolve thy sin,
 And mercy's gate may receive thee within:
 But pause one moment more, and take
 The curse of Him thou didst forsake;
 And look once more to heaven, and see
 Its love forever shut from thee.
 There is a light cloud by the moon—
 'Tis passing, and will pass full soon—
 If, by the time its vapoury sail
 Hath ceased her shaded orb to veil,
 Thy heart within thee is not changed,
 Then God and man are both avenged;
 Dark will thy doom be, darker still
 Thine immortality of ill."

Alp looked to heaven, and saw on high
 The sign she spake of in the sky;
 But his heart was swollen, and turned aside,
 By deep interminable pride.
 This first false passion of his breast
 Rolled like a torrent o'er the rest.
 He sue for mercy! He dismayed
 By wild words of a timid maid!
 He, wronged by Venice, vow to save
 Her sons, devoted to the grave!
 No—though that cloud were thunder's worst,
 And charged to crush him—let it burst!

He looked upon it earnestly,
 Without an accent of reply;
 He watched it passing: it is flown:
 Full on his eye the clear moon shone,
 And thus he spake: "Whate'er my fate,
 I am no changeling—'tis too late:
 The reed in storms may bow and quiver,
 Then rise again; the tree must shiver.
 What Venice made me, I must be,
 Her foe in all, save love to thee:
 But thou art safe: oh, fly with me!"
 He turned, but she is gone!
 Nothing is there but the column stone.
 Hath she sunk in the earth, or melted in air?
 He saw not—he knew not—but nothing is there.

XXII

The night is past, and shines the sun
 As if that morn were a jocund one.
 Lightly and brightly breaks away
 The Morning from her mantle gray,
 And the Noon will look on a sultry day.
 Hark to the tramp, and the drum,
 And the mournful sound of the barbarous horn,
 And the flap of the banners, that flit as they're borne,
 And the neigh of the steed, and the multitude's hum,
 And the clash and the shout, "They come, they come!"
 The horsetails are plucked from the ground, and the sword
 From its sheath; and they form, and but wait for the word.
 Tartar, and Spahi, and Turcoman,
 Strike your tents, and throng to the van;
 Mount ye, spur ye, skirr the plain,
 That the fugitive may flee in vain,
 When he breaks from the town; and none escape,
 Aged or young in the Christian shape;
 While your fellows on foot, in a fiery mass,
 Bloodstain the breach through which they pass.
 The steeds are all bridled, and snort to the rein;
 Curved is each neck, and flowing each mane;
 White is the foam of their champ on the bit:
 The spears are uplifted; the matches are lit;
 The cannon are pointed, and ready to roar,
 And crush the wall they have crumbled before:
 Forms in his phalanx each Janizar;
 Alp at their head; his right arm is bare,
 So is the blade of his scimitar;
 The khan and the pachas are all at their post:

The vizier himself at the head of the host.
 When the culverin's signal is fired, then on ;
 Leave not in Corinth a living one—
 A priest at her altars, a chief in her halls,
 A hearth in her mansions, a stone on her walls.
 God and the Prophet—Allah Hu !
 Up to the skies with that wild halloo !

“ There the breach lies for passage, the ladder to scale ;
 And your hands on your sabres, and how should ye fail ?
 He who first downs with the red cross may crave
 His heart's dearest wish ; let him ask it, and have ! ”
 Thus uttered Coumourgi, the dauntless vizier ;
 The reply was the brandish of sabre and spear,
 And the shout of fierce thousands in joyous ire :—
 Silence—hark to the signal—fire !

XXIII

As the wolves, that headlong go
 On the stately buffalo,
 Though with fiery eyes, and angry roar,
 And hoofs that stamp, and horns that gore,
 He tramples on earth, or tosses on high
 The foremost, who rush on his strength but to die ;
 Thus against the wall they went,
 Thus the first were backward bent ;
 Many a bosom, sheathed in brass,
 Strewed the earth like broken glass,
 Shivered by the shot, that tore
 The ground whereon they moved no more :
 Even as they fell, in files they lay,
 Like the mower's grass at the close of day,
 When his work is done on the levelled plain ;
 Such was the fall of the foremost slain.

XXIV

As the spring-tides, with heavy splash,
 From the cliffs invading dash
 Huge fragments, sapped by the ceaseless flow,
 Till white and thundering down they go,
 Like the avalanche's snow
 On the Alpine vales below ;
 Thus at length, outbreathed and worn,
 Corinth's sons were downward borne
 By the long and oft-renewed
 Charge of the Moslem multitude.
 In firmness they stood, and in masses they fell,

Heaped, by the host of the infidel,
Hand to hand, and foot to foot :
Nothing there, save death, was mute ;
Stroke, and thrust, and flash, and cry
For quarter, or for victory,
Mingle there with the volleying thunder,
Which makes the distant cities wonder
How the sounding battle goes,
If with them, or for their foes ;
If they must mourn, or may rejoice
In that annihilating voice,
Which pierces the deep hills through and through
With an echo dread and new ;
You might have heard it, on that day,
O'er Salamis and Megara ;
(We have heard the hearers say),
Even unto Piræus' bay.

XXV

From the point of encountering blades to the hilt,
Sabres and swords with blood were gilt ;
But the rampart is won, and the spoil begun,
And all but the after carnage done.
Shriller shrieks now mingling come
From within the plundered dome :
Hark to the haste of flying feet,
That splash in the blood of the slippery street ;
But here and there, where 'vantage ground
Against the foe may still be found,
Desperate groups, of twelve or ten,
Make a pause, and turn again—
With banded backs against the wall,
Fiercely stand, or fighting fall.

There stood an old man—his hairs were white,
But his veteran arm was full of might ;
So gallantly bore he the brunt of the fray,
The dead before him on that day
In a semicircle lay ;
Still he combated unwounded,
Though retreating, unsurrounded.
Many a scar of former fight
Lurked beneath his corslet bright ;
But of every wound his body bore,
Each and all had been taken before ;
Though aged, he was so iron of limb,
Few of our youth could cope with him ;

And the foes, whom he singly kept at bay,
 Outnumbered his thin hairs of silver gray.
 From right to left his sabre swept :
 Many an Othman mother wept
 Sons that were unborn, when dipped
 His weapon first in Moslem gore,
 Ere his years could count a score.
 Of all he might have been the sire
 Who fell that day beneath his ire :
 For, sonless left long years ago,
 His wrath made many a childless foe ;
 And since the day, when in the strait ⁸
 His only boy had met his fate,
 His parent's iron hand did doom
 More than a human hecatomb.
 If shades by carnage be appeased,
 Patroclus's spirit less was pleased
 Than his, Minotti's son, who died
 Where Asia's bounds and ours divide,
 Buried he lay, where thousands before
 For thousands of years were inhumed on the shore ;
 What of them is left, to tell
 Where they lie, and how they fell ?
 Not a stone on their turf, nor a bone in their graves ;
 But they live in the verse that immortally saves.

XXVI

Hark to the Allah shout ! a band
 Of the Mussulman bravest and best is at hand :
 Their leader's nervous arm is bare,
 Swifter to smite, and never to spare—
 Unclothed to the shoulder it waves them on ;
 Thus in the fight is he ever known :
 Others a gaudier garb may show,
 To tempt the spoil of the greedy foe ;
 Many a hand's on a richer hilt,
 But none on a steel more ruddily gilt ;
 Many a loftier turban may wear—
 Alp is but known by the white arm bare ;
 Look through the thick of the fight, 'tis there !
 There is not a standard on that shore
 So well advanced the ranks before ;
 There is not a banner in Moslem war
 Will lure the Delhis half so far ;
 It glances like a falling star !
 Where'er that mighty arm is seen,
 The bravest be, or late have been ;

There the craven cries for quarter
Vainly to the vengeful Tartar;
Or the hero, silent lying,
Scorns to yield a groan in dying;
Mustering his last feeble blow
'Gainst the nearest levelled foe,
Though faint beneath the mutual wound,
Grappling on the gory ground.

XXVII

Still the old man stood erect,
And Alp's career a moment checked.
"Yield thee, Minotti; quarter take,
For thine own, thy daughter's sake."

"Never, renegado, never!
Though the life of thy gift would last forever."

"Francesca!—oh, my promised bride:
Must she too perish by thy pride?"

"She is safe."—"Where? where?"—"In heaven;
From whence thy traitor soul is driven—
Far from thee, and undefiled."
Grimly then Minotti smiled,
As he saw Alp staggering bow
Before his words, as with a blow.

"O God! when died she?"—"Yesternight—
Nor weep I for her spirit's flight:
None of my pure race shall be
Slaves to Mohammed and thee—
Come on!"—"That challenge is in vain—
Alp's already with the slain!
While Minotti's words were wreaking
More revenge in bitter speaking
Than his falchion's point had found,
Had the time allowed to wound,
From within the neighbouring porch
Of a long-defended church,
Where the last and desperate few
Would the failing fight renew,
The sharp shot dashed Alp to the ground;
Ere an eye could view the wound
That crashed through the brain of the infidel,
Round he spun, and down he fell;
A flash like fire within his eyes

Blazed, as he bent no more to rise,
 And then eternal darkness sunk
 Through all the palpitating trunk;
 Naught of life left, save a quivering
 Where his limbs were slightly shivering:
 They turned him on his back; his breast
 And brow were stained with gore and dust,
 And through his lips the life-blood oozed,
 From its deep veins lately loosed;
 But in his pulse there was no throb,
 Nor on his lips one dying sob;
 Sigh, nor word, nor struggling breath
 Heralded his way to death:
 Ere his very thought could pray,
 Unaneled he passed away,
 Without a hope from mercy's aid—
 To the last—a Renegade.

XXVIII

Fearfully the yell arose
 Of his followers, and his foes;
 These in joy, in fury those:
 Then again in conflict mixing,
 Clashing swords, and spears transfixing,
 Interchanged the blow and thrust,
 Hurling warriors in the dust.
 Street by street, and foot by foot,
 Still Minotti dares dispute
 The latest portion of the land
 Left beneath his high command;
 With him, aiding heart and hand,
 The remnant of his gallant band.

Still the church is tenable,
 Whence issued late the fated ball
 That half avenged the city's fall,
 When Alp, her fierce assailant, fell:
 Thither bending sternly back,
 They leave before a bloody track;
 And, with their faces to the foe,
 Dealing wounds with every blow,
 The chief, and his retreating train,
 Join to those within the fane;
 There they yet may breathe awhile,
 Sheltered by the massy pile.

XXIX

Brief breathing-time! the turbaned host,
 With added ranks and raging boast,

Press onward with such strength and heat,
Their numbers balk their own retreat;
For narrow the way that led to the spot
Where still the Christians yielded not;
And the foremost, if fearful, may vainly try
Through the massy columns to turn and fly;
They perforce must do or die.
They die: but ere their eyes could close,
Avengers o'er their bodies rose;
Fresh and furious, fast they fill
The ranks unthinned, though slaughtered still:
And faint the weary Christians wax
Before the still renewed attacks:
And now the Othmans gain the gate;
Still resists its iron weight,
And still, all deadly aimed and hot,
From every crevice comes the shot;
From every shattered window pour
The volleys of the sulphurous shower:
But the portal wavering grows and weak—
The iron yields, the hinges creak—
It bends—and falls—and all is o'er;
Lost Corinth may resist no more!

xxx

Dark, sternly, and all alone,
Minotti stood o'er the altar stone:
Madonna's face upon him shone,
Painted in heavenly hues above,
With eyes of light and looks of love:
And placed upon that holy shrine
To fix our thoughts on things divine,
When pictured there we kneeling see
Her, and the boy-God on her knee,
Smiling sweetly on each prayer
To heaven, as if to waft it there.
Still she smiled; even now she smiles,
Though slaughter streams along her aisles:
Minotti lifted his aged eye,
And made the sign of a cross with a sigh,
Then seized a torch which blazed thereby;
And still he stood, while, with steel and flame,
Inward and onward the Mussulman came.

xxxi

The vaults beneath the mosaic stone
Contained the dead of ages gone;

Their names were on the graven floor,
 But now illegible with gore;
 The carved crests, and curious hues
 The varied marble's veins diffuse,
 Were smeared, and slippery—stained, and strown
 With broken swords, and helms o'erthrown:
 There were dead above, and the dead below
 Lay cold in many a confined row;
 You might see them piled in sable state,
 By a pale light through a gloomy grate:
 But War had entered their dark caves,
 And stored along the vaulted graves
 Her sulphurous treasures, thickly spread
 In masses by the fleshless dead:

Here, throughout the siege, had been
 The Christians' chiefest magazine;
 To these a late-formed train now led,
 Minotti's last and stern resource,
 Against the foe's o'erwhelming force.

XXXII

The foe came on, and few remain
 To strive, and those must strive in vain:
 For lack of further lives, to slake
 The thirst of vengeance now awake,
 With barbarous blows they gash the dead,
 And lop the already lifeless head,
 And fell the statues from their niche,
 And spoil the shrines of offerings rich,
 And from each other's rude hands wrest
 The silver vessels saints had blessed.
 To the high altar on they go;
 Oh, but it made a glorious show!
 On its table still behold
 The cup of consecrated gold;
 Massy and deep, a glittering prize,
 Brightly it sparkles to plunderers' eyes:
 That morn it held the holy wine,
 Converted by Christ to His blood so divine,
 Which His worshippers drank at the break of day
 To shrive their souls ere they joined in the fray,
 Still a few drops within it lay;
 And round the sacred table glow
 Twelve lofty lamps, in splendid row,
 From the purest metal cast;
 A spoil—the richest, and the last.

XXXIII

So near they came, the nearest stretched
To grasp the spoil he almost reached,
When old Minotti's hand
Touched with a torch the train—
'Tis fired!
Spire, vaults, and shrine, the spoil, the slain,
The turbaned victors, the Christian band,
All that of living or dead remain,
Hurled on high with the shivered fane,
In one wild roar expired!
The shattered town—the walls thrown down—
The waves a moment backward bent—
The hills that shake, although unrent,
As if an earthquake passed—
The thousand shapeless things all driven
In cloud and flame athwart the heaven,
By that tremendous blast—
Proclaimed the desperate conflict o'er
On that too long afflicted shore!
Up to the sky like rockets go
All that mingled there below:
Many a tall and goodly man,
Scorched and shrivelled to a span,
When he fell to earth again
Like a cinder strewed the plain:
Down the ashes shower like rain;
Some fell in the gulf, which received the sprinkles
With a thousand circling wrinkles;
Some fell on the shore, but, far away,
Scattered o'er the isthmus lay;
Christian or Moslem, which be they?
Let their mothers see and say!
When in cradled rest they lay,
And each nursing mother smiled
On the sweet sleep of her child,
Little deemed she such a day
Would rend those tender limbs away.
Not the matrons that them bore
Could discern their offspring more;
That one moment left no trace
More of human form or face
Save a scattered scalp or bone:
And down came blazing rafters, strown
Around, and many a falling stone,
Deeply dinted in the clay,

All blackened there and reeking lay.
 All the living things that heard
 That deadly earth-shock disappeared :
 The wild birds flew ; the wild dogs fled,
 And howling left the unburied dead ;
 The camels from their keepers broke ;
 The distant steer forsook the yoke—
 The nearer steed plunged o'er the plain,
 And burst his girth, and tore his rein ;
 The bull-frog's note, from out the marsh,
 Deep-mouthed arose, and doubly harsh ;
 The wolves yelled on the caverned hill
 Where echo rolled in thunder still ;
 The jackal's troop, in gathered cry,⁹
 Bayed from afar complainingly,
 With a mixed and mournful sound,
 Like crying babe, and beaten hound :
 With sudden wing, and ruffled breast,
 The eagle left his rocky nest,
 And mounted nearer to the sun,
 The clouds beneath him seemed so dun
 Their smoke assailed his startled beak,
 And made him higher soar and shriek—
 Thus was Corinth lost and won !

NOTES

¹ The life of the Turcomans is wandering and patriarchal : they dwell in tents.

² Ali Coumourgi, the favourite of three sultans, and Grand Vizier to Achmet III, after recovering Peloponnesus from the Venetians in one campaign, was mortally wounded in the next, against the Germans, at the battle of Peterwaradin (in the plain of Carlowitz), in Hungary, endeavouring to rally his guards. He died of his wounds next day. His last order was the decapitation of General Brenner and some other German prisoners ; and his last words, "Oh that I could thus serve all the Christian dogs !" a speech and act not unlike one of Caligula. He was a young man of great ambition and unbounded presumption : on being told that Prince Eugene, then opposed to him, "was a great general," he said, "I shall become a greater, and at his expense."

³ The reader need hardly be reminded that there are no perceptible tides in the Mediterranean.

⁴ This spectacle I have seen, such as described, beneath the wall of the Seraglio at Constantinople, in the little cavities worn by the Bosphorus in the rock, a narrow terrace of which projects between the wall and the water. I think the fact is also mentioned in Hobhouse's Travels. The bodies were probably those of some refractory Janizaries.

⁵ This tuft, or long lock, is left from a superstition that Mohammed will draw them into paradise by it.

⁶ I must here acknowledge a close, though unintentional, resemblance in these twelve lines to a passage in an unpublished poem of Mr. Coleridge, called "Christabel." It was not till after these lines were written

that I heard that wild and singularly original and beautiful poem recited: and the manuscript of that production I never saw till very recently, by the kindness of Mr. Coleridge himself, who, I hope, is convinced that I have not been a wilful plagiarist. The original idea undoubtedly pertains to Mr. Coleridge, whose poem has been composed above fourteen years. Let me conclude by a hope that he will not longer delay the publication of a production, of which I can only add my mite of approbation to the applause of far more competent judges.

⁷ I have been told that the idea expressed in this and the five following lines has been admired by those whose approbation is valuable. I am glad of it: but it is not original—at least not mine; it may be found much better expressed in the English version of "Vathek," a work to which I have before referred; and never recur to, or read, without a renewal of gratification.

⁸ In the naval battle at the mouth of the Dardanelles, between the Venetians and the Turks.

⁹ I believe I have taken a poetical license to transplant the jackal from Asia. In Greece I never saw nor heard these animals; but among the ruins of Ephesus I have heard them by hundreds. They haunt ruins, and follow armies.

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

ADVERTISEMENT

WHEN this poem was composed, I was not sufficiently aware of the history of Bonnivard, or I should have endeavoured to dignify the subject by an attempt to celebrate his courage and his virtues. Some account of his life will be found below, furnished me by the kindness of a citizen of that republic, which is still proud of the memory of a man worthy of the best age of ancient freedom :

“François de Bonnivard, son of Louis de Bonnivard, a native of Seysel, and Seigneur of Lunes, was born in 1496 ; he was educated at Turin. In 1510 his uncle, Jean-Reiné de Bonnivard, resigned to him the Priory of Saint-Victor, which adjoins the walls of Geneva, and which was a considerable living.

“This great man—Bonnivard is deserving of this title from his greatness of soul, the uprightness of his heart, the nobility of his intentions, the wisdom of his counsels, the courage of his actions, the extent of his learning, and the brilliancy of his wit—this great man, who will ever excite the admiration of all those whom an heroic virtue can move, will always inspire the most lively gratitude in the hearts of those Genevese who love Geneva. Bonnivard was always one of its firmest supports ; to protect the liberty of our republic, he never feared to lose his own ; he forgot his ease, he despised his wealth ; he neglected nothing to render certain the happiness of the country that he dignified by his adoption ; from that moment he loved it as the most zealous of its citizens, he served it with the intrepidity of a hero, and he wrote its history with the simplicity of a philosopher and the ardour of a patriot.

“He says in the commencement of his ‘History of Geneva,’ that, ‘as soon as he commenced to read the histories of nations, he felt himself carried away by his love for republics, the interest of which he always advocated.’ It was, doubtless, this very love of liberty that made him adopt Geneva as his country.

“Bonnivard, while yet young, boldly stood forward as the defender of Geneva, against the Duke of Savoy and the Bishop.

“In 1519 Bonnivard became the martyr of his country ; the Duke of Savoy having entered Geneva with five hundred men, Bonnivard feared the resentment of the Duke ; he wished to return to Fribourg to avoid the consequences ; but he was betrayed by two men who accompanied him, and conducted by order of the Prince to Grolée, where for two years he remained a prisoner.

“Bonnivard was unfortunate in his travels. As his misfortunes had not slackened his zeal for Geneva, he was always a redoubtable enemy to

those who threatened it, and accordingly he was likely to be exposed to their violence. He was met in 1530 on the Jura by thieves, who stripped him of everything and placed him again in the hands of the Duke of Savoy. This Prince caused him to be confined in the Château of Chillon, where he remained without being submitted to any interrogatory until 1536; he was then delivered by the Bernois, who took possession of the Pays de Vaud.

"Bonnivard, on leaving his captivity, had the pleasure of finding Geneva free and reformed. The republic hastened to testify its gratitude to him, and to recompense him for the evils which he had suffered. It received him as a citizen of the town, in the month of June, 1536; it gave him the house formerly inhabited by the Vicar-General, and assigned to him a pension of two hundred gold crowns, as long as he should sojourn in Geneva. He was admitted into the council of Two Hundred in 1537.

"Bonnivard did not now cease to be useful; after having laboured to make Geneva free, he succeeded in making it tolerant. Bonnivard prevailed upon the council to accord to the Calvinists and peasants a sufficient time for examining the propositions which were made to them; he succeeded by his meekness. Christianity is always preached with success when it is preached with charity.

"Bonnivard was learned. His manuscripts, which are in the public library, prove that he had diligently studied the Latin classics, and that he had penetrated the depths of theology and history. This great man loved the sciences, and thought they would constitute the glory of Geneva; accordingly, he neglected nothing to establish them in this rising town. In 1551 he gave his library to the public; it was the commencement of our public library. And a portion of his books are those rare and beautiful editions of the fifteenth century which are seen in our collection. Finally, during the same year, this good patriot appointed the republic his heir, on condition that it would employ his wealth in supporting the college, the foundation of which was being projected.

"It appears that Bonnivard died in 1570; but this can not be certified, as a hiatus occurs in the Necrology, from the month of July, 1570, to 1571."

SONNET ON CHILLON

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind!
 Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
 For there thy habitation is the heart—
 The heart which love of thee alone can bind;
 And when thy sons to fetters are consigned—
 To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
 Their country conquers with their martyrdom.
 And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
 Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
 And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod,
 Until his very steps have left a trace
 Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
 By Bonnivard!—May none those marks efface!
 For they appeal from tyranny to God.

I

My hair is gray, but not with years,
Nor grew it white
In a single night,¹
As men's have grown from sudden fears:
My limbs are bowed, though not with toil,
But rusted with a vile repose,
For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
And mine has been the fate of those
To whom the goodly earth and air
Are banned, and barred—forbidden fare;
But this was for my father's faith
I suffered chains and courted death;
That father perished at the stake
For tenets he would not forsake;
And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling-place;
We were seven—who now are one,
Six in youth, and one in age,
Finished as they had begun,
Proud of Persecution's rage;
One in fire, and two in field,
Their belief with blood have sealed;
Dying as their father died,
For the God their foes denied;
Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

II

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould,
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,
There are seven columns, massy and gray,
Dim with a dull imprisoned ray,
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left;
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp:
And in each pillar there is a ring,
And in each ring there is a chain;
That iron is a cankering thing,
For in these limbs its teeth remain,
With marks that will not wear away,
Till I have done with this new day,
Which now is painful to these eyes,
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years—I can not count them o'er,

I lost their long and heavy score
When my last brother drooped and died,
And I lay living by his side.

III

They chained us each to a column stone,
And we were three—yet, each alone:
We could not move a single pace,
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight;
And thus together—yet apart,
Fettered in hand, but pined in heart;
'Twas still some solace in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each
With some new hope, or legend old,
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold.
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon-stone,
A grating sound—not full and free
As they of yore were wont to be;
It might be fancy—but to me
They never sounded like our own.

joined

IV

I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest
I ought to do—and did—my best,
And each did well in his degree.
The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given
To him—with eyes as blue as heaven,
For him my soul was sorely moved;
And truly might it be distressed
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day—
(When day was beautiful to me
As to young eagles, being free)—
A polar day, which will not see
A sunset till its summer's gone,
Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:
And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,

With tears for naught but others' ills,
 And then they flowed like mountain rills,
 Unless he could assuage the woe
 Which he abhorred to view below.

V

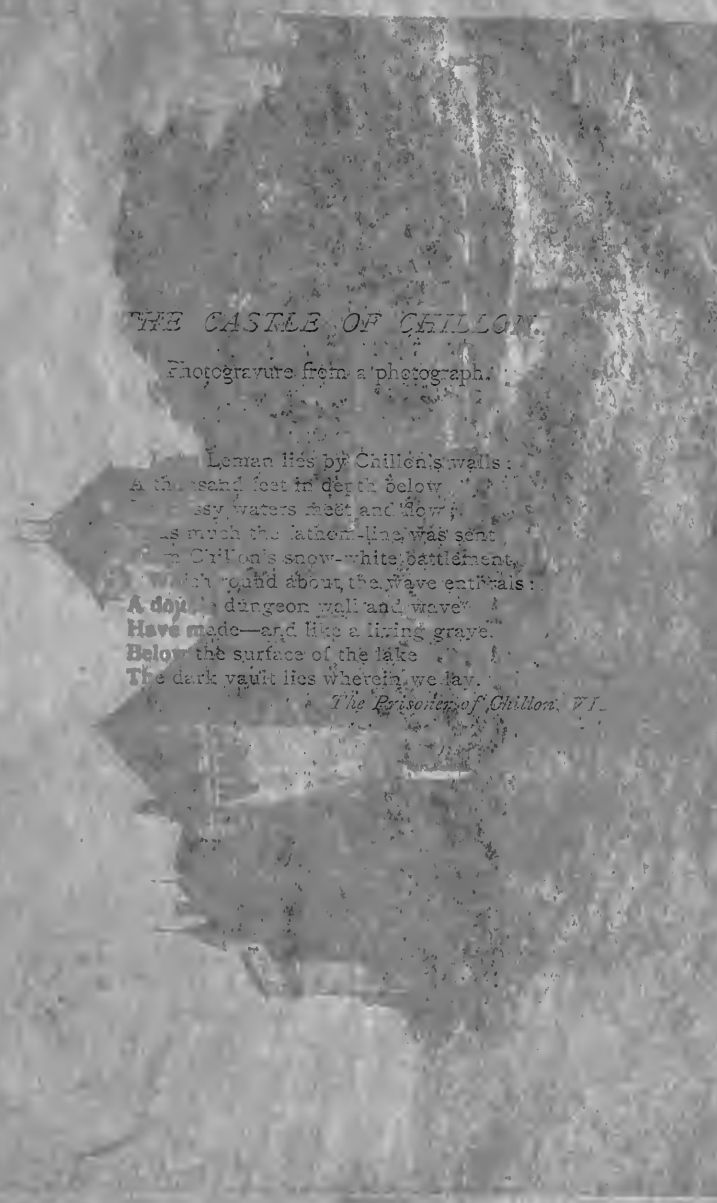
The other was as pure of mind,
 But formed to combat with his kind;
 Strong in his frame, and of a mood
 Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,
 And perished in the foremost rank
 With joy:—but not in chains to pine:
 His spirit withered with their clank,
 I saw it silently decline—
 And so perchance in sooth did mine;
 But yet I forced it on to cheer
 Those relics of a home so dear.
 He was a hunter of the hills,
 Had followed there the deer and wolf:
 To him this dungeon was a gulf,
 And fettered feet the worst of ills.

VI

Lake Lemman lies by Chillon's walls:
 A thousand feet in depth below
 Its massy waters meet and flow;
 Thus much the fathom-line was sent
 From Chillon's snow-white battlement,²
 Which round about the wave enthralls:
 A double dungeon wall and wave
 Have made—and like a living grave.
 Below the surface of the lake
 The dark vault lies wherein we lay,
 We heard it ripple night and day;
 Sounding o'er our heads it knocked;
 And I have felt the winter's spray
 Wash through the bars when winds were high,
 And wanton in the happy sky;
 And then the very rock hath rocked,
 And I have felt it shake, unshocked,
 Because I could have smiled to see
 The death that would have set me free.

VII

I said my nearer brother pined,
 I said his mighty heart declined,
 He loathed and put away his food:



THE CASTLE OF CHILLON.

Photogravure from a photograph.

Leman lies by Chillon's walls :
A thousand feet in depth below,
The foamy waters meet and flow ;
As much the lathem-line was sent
In Chillon's snow-white battlement,
Which round about the wave enthralls :
A dolphin to dungeon wall and wave
Have made—and like a living grave.
Below the surface of the lake
The dark vault lies wherein we lay.

The Prisoners of Chillon, VI.

With tears for all our woes and ills,
 And then for all our woes and ills,
 Unless he could have found the food
 Which he had found in the world below.

The old man's face was all in pain,
 His eyes were all in pain and pain;
 His mouth was all in pain and pain,
 His heart was all in pain and pain,
 His soul was all in pain and pain,
 His body was all in pain and pain.

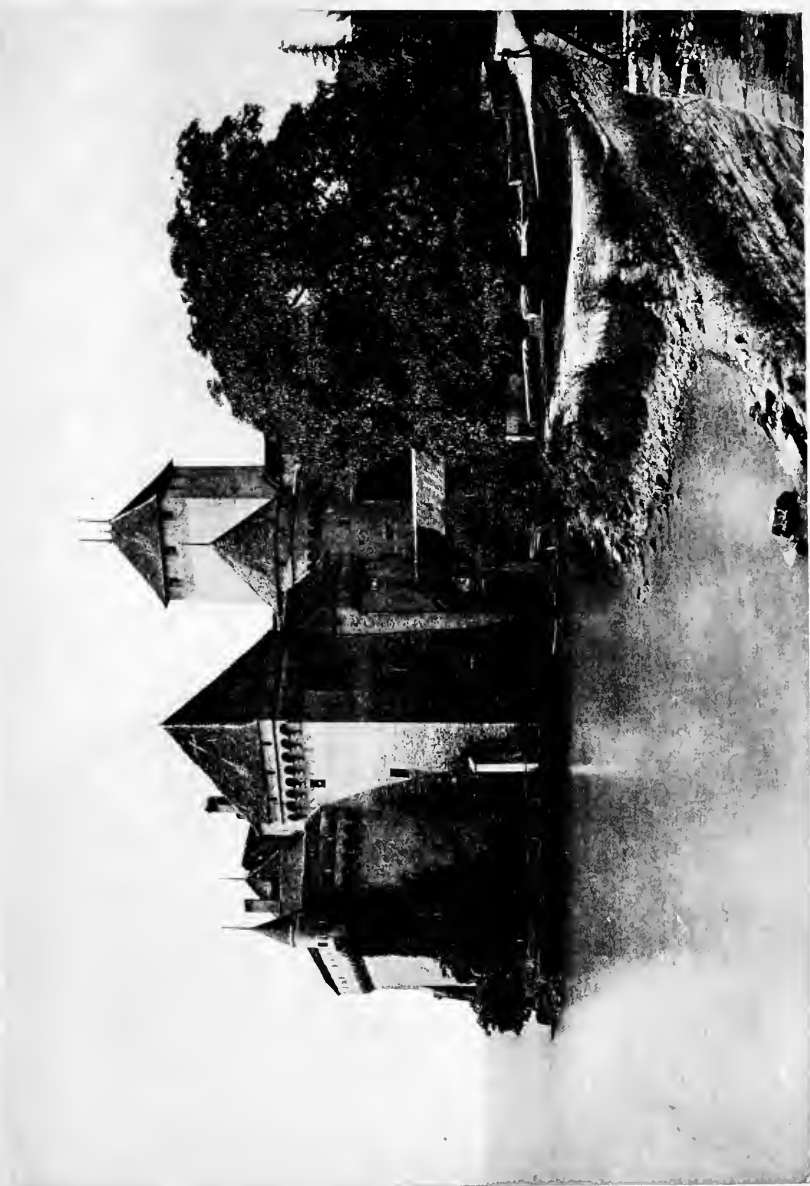
And so it was in all the world;
 But yet I turned it on to cheer
 Those who were all in pain and pain;
 He was a hunter, and he had
 Had followed them all over the world,
 To him the world was all in pain,
 And fettered feet the worst of all.

Lake Lemah lies by Chillon's walls,
 A thou and five in depth,
 Its water is all in pain and pain,
 Its water is all in pain and pain,
 Its water is all in pain and pain,
 Its water is all in pain and pain.

Thus much the fathom-line was sent
 From Chillon's snow-white battlement,
 Which round about the wave enthralls:
 A double dungeon wall and wave
 Have made—and like a living grave
 Holds the surface of the lake
 The dark water lies, and in the day,
 We have seen the light and day,
 Bounding the water's surface;
 And I have seen the water's surface
 Wash through the water's surface,
 And washing in the happy day,
 And how the very rock hath rotted,
 And I have felt it shake, unshaken,
 Because I could have smiled to see
 The death that would have set me free.

VII

I said my nearer brother pined,
 I said his mighty heart declined,
 He loathed and put away his food:





It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunter's fare,
And for the like had little care:
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat,
Our bread was such as captive's tears
Have moistened many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow-men
Like brutes within an iron den:
But what were these to us or him?
These wasted not his heart or limb;
My brother's soul was of that mould
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side;
But why delay the truth?—he died.
I saw, and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead—
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,
'To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
He died—and they unlocked his chain,
And scooped for him a shallow grave
Even from the cold earth of our cave.
I begged them, as a boon, to lay
His corse in dust whereon the day
Might shine—it was a foolish thought,
But then within my brain it wrought,
That even in death his free-born breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.
I might have spared my idle prayer—
They coldly laughed—and laid him there:
The flat and turfless earth above
The being we so much did love;
His empty chain above it leant,
Such murder's fitting monument!

VIII

But he, the favourite and the flower,
Most cherished since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyred father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free;
He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired—

He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was withered on the stalk away.
O God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood:—
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
I've seen it on the breaking ocean
Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
Of Sin delirious with its dread:
But these were horrors—this was woe
Unmixed with such—but sure and slow:
He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak.
So tearless, yet so tender—kind,
And grieved for those he left behind
With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray—
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright,
And not a word of murmur—not
A groan o'er his untimely lot—
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,
For I was sunk in silence—lost
In this last loss, of all the most;
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less:
I listened, but I could not hear—
I called, for I was wild with fear:
I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread
Would not be thus admonished;
I called, and thought I heard a sound—
I burst my chain with one strong bound,
And rushed to him:—I found him not,
I only stirred in this black spot,
I only lived—I only drew
The accursed breath of dungeon-dew;
The last—the sole—the dearest link
Between me and the eternal brink,
Which bound me to my failing race,
Was broken in this fatal place.
One on the earth, and one beneath—
My brothers—both had ceased to breathe:

I took that hand which lay so still,
Alas! my own was full as chill;
I had not strength to stir, or strive,
But felt that I was still alive—
A frantic feeling, when we know
That what we love shall ne'er be so.

I know not why

I could not die,

I had no earthly hope—but faith,
And that forbade a selfish death.

IX

What next befell me then and there

I know not well—I never knew—

First came the loss of light and air,

And then of darkness too:

I had no thought, no feeling—none—

Among the stones I stood a stone,

And was, scarce conscious what I wist,

As shrubless crags within the mist;

For all was blank, and bleak, and gray,

It was not night—it was not day,

It was not even the dungeon-light,

So hateful to my heavy sight,

But vacancy absorbing space,

And fixedness—without a place;

There were no stars—no earth—no time—

No check—no change—no good—no crime—

But silence, and a stirless breath

Which neither was of life nor death;

A sea of stagnant idleness,

Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless!

X

A light broke in upon my brain—

It was the carol of a bird;

It ceased, and then it came again,

The sweetest song ear ever heard,

And mine was thankful till my eyes

Ran over with the glad surprise,

And they that moment could not see

I was the mate of misery;

But then by dull degrees came back

My senses to their wonted track,

I saw the dungeon walls and floor

Close slowly round me as before,

I saw the glimmer of the sun

Creeping as it before had done,
 But through the crevice where it came
 That bird was perched, as fond and tame,
 And tamer than upon the tree;
 A lovely bird, with azure wings,
 And song that said a thousand things,
 And seemed to say them all for me!
 I never saw its like before,
 I ne'er shall see its likeness more:
 It seemed, like me, to want a mate,
 But was not half so desolate,
 And it was come to love me when
 None lived to love me so again,
 And cheering from my dungeon's brink,
 Had brought me back to feel and think.
 I know not if it late were free,
 Or broke its cage to perch on mine,
 But knowing well captivity,
 Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!
 Or if it were, in winged guise,
 A visitant from Paradise;
 For—Heaven forgive that thought! the while
 Which made me both to weep and smile—
 I sometimes deemed that it might be
 My brother's soul come down to me;
 But then at last away it flew,
 And then 'twas mortal—well I knew,
 For he would never thus have flown,
 And left me twice so doubly lone—
 Lone—as the corse within its shroud,
 Lone—as a solitary cloud,
 A single cloud on a sunny day,
 While all the rest of heaven is clear
 A frown upon the atmosphere,
 That hath no business to appear
 When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

XI

A kind of change came in my fate,
 My keepers grew compassionate,
 I know not what had made them so,
 They were inured to sights of woe,
 But so it was:—my broken chain
 With links unfastened did remain,
 And it was liberty to stride
 Along my cell from side to side,
 And up and down, and then athwart,

And tread it over every part ;
And round the pillars one by one,
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod ;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crushed heart fell blind and sick.

XII

I made a footing in the wall,
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all,
Who loved me in a human shape ;
And the whole earth would henceforth be
A wider prison unto me :
No child—no sire—no kin had I,
No partner in my misery ;
I thought of this, and I was glad,
For thought of them had made me mad :
But I was curious to ascend
To my barred windows, and to bend
Once more, upon the mountains high,
The quiet of a loving eye.

XIII

I saw them—and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame ;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high—their wide long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow :
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channelled rock and broken bush :
I saw the white-walled distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down ;
And then there was a little isle,³
Which in my very face did smile,
The only one in view ;
A small green isle, it seemed no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing,
Of gentle breath and hue.
The fish swam by the castle wall,

And they seemed joyous each and all;
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seemed to fly,
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled—and would fain
I had not left my recent chain;
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode
Fell on me as a heavy load;
It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save,—
And yet my glance, too much oppressed,
Had almost need of such a rest.

XIV

It might be months, or years, or days,
I kept no count—I took no note,
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote;
At last men came to set me free,
I asked not why, and recked not where,
It was at length the same to me,
Fettered or fetterless to be,
I learned to love despair.
And thus when they appeared at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage—and all my own!
And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home:
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watched them in their sullen trade,
Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
And why should I feel less than they?
We were all inmates of one place,
And I, the monarch of each race,
Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell!
In quiet we had learned to dwell—
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are:—even I
Regained my freedom with a sigh.

NOTES

¹ Ludovico Sforza, and others.—The same is asserted of Marie Antoinette's, the wife of Louis XVI, though not in quite so short a period. Grief is said to have the same effect: to such, and not to fear, this change in hers was to be attributed.

² The Château de Chillon is situated between Clarens and Villeneuve, which last is at one extremity of the Lake of Geneva. On its left are the entrances of the Rhone, and opposite are the heights of Meillerie and the range of Alps above Boveret and St. Gingo.

Near it, on a hill behind, is a torrent; below it, washing its walls, the lake has been fathomed to the depth of 800 feet (French measure); within it are a range of dungeons, in which the early reformers, and subsequently prisoners of state, were confined. Across one of the vaults is a beam black with age, on which we were informed that the condemned were formerly executed. In the cells are seven pillars, or, rather, eight, one being half merged in the wall; in some of these are rings for the fetters and the fettered: in the pavement the steps of Bonnivard have left their traces—he was confined here several years.

It is by this castle that Rousseau has fixed the catastrophe of his *Héloise*, in the rescue of one of her children by Julie from the water; the shock of which, and the illness produced by the immersion, is the cause of her death.

The château is large, and seen along the lake for a great distance. The walls are white.

³ Between the entrances of the Rhone and Villeneuve, not far from Chillon, is a very small island; the only one I could perceive, in my voyage round and over the lake, within its circumference. It contains a few trees (I think not above three), and from its singleness and diminutive size has a peculiar effect upon the view.

THE DREAM

I

OUR life is twofold : Sleep hath its own world,
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence : Sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality,
And dreams in their development have breath,
And tears and tortures, and the touch of joy ;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off our waking toils,
They do divide our being ; they become
A portion of ourselves as of our time,
And look like heralds of eternity ;
They pass like spirits of the past—they speak
Like sibyls of the future ; they have power—
The tyranny of pleasure and of pain ;
They make us what we were not—what they will,
And shake us with the vision that's gone by,
The dread of vanished shadows—Are they so ?
Is not the past all shadow ? What are they ?
Creations of the mind ?—The mind can make
Substance, and people planets of its own
With beings brighter than have been, and give
A breath to forms which can outlive all flesh.
I would recall a vision which I dreamed
Perchance in sleep—for in itself a thought,
A slumbering thought, is capable of years,
And curdles a long life into one hour.

II

I saw two beings in the hues of youth
Standing upon a hill, a gentle hill,
Green and of mild declivity, the last
As 'twere the cape of a long ridge of such,
Save that there was no sea to lave its base,

But a most living landscape, and the wave
Of woods and cornfields, and the abodes of men
Scattered at intervals, and wreathing smoke
Arising from such rustic roofs;—the hill
Was crowned with a peculiar diadem
Of trees, in circular array, so fixed,
Not by the sport of nature, but of man!
These two, a maiden and a youth, were there,
Gazing—the one on all that was beneath
Fair as herself—but the boy gazed on her:
And both were young, and one was beautiful:
And both were young—yet not alike in youth.
As the sweet moon on the horizon's verge,
The maid was on the eve of womanhood;
The boy had fewer summers, but his heart
Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
There was but one beloved face on earth,
And that was shining on him; he had looked
Upon it till it could not pass away;
He had no breath, no being, but in hers:
She was his voice; he did not speak to her,
But trembled on her words; she was his sight,
For his eye followed hers, and saw with hers,
Which coloured all his objects:—he had ceased
To live within himself; she was his life,
The ocean to the river of his thoughts,
Which terminated all: upon a tone,
A touch of hers, his blood would ebb and flow,
And his cheek change tempestuously—his heart
Unknowing of its cause of agony.
But she in these fond feelings had no share:
Her sighs were not for him; to her he was
Even as a brother—but no more; 'twas much,
For brotherless she was, save in the name
Her infant friendship had bestowed on him:
Herself the solitary scion left
Of a time-honoured race.—It was a name
Which pleased him, and yet pleased him not—and why?
Time taught him a deep answer—when she loved
Another; even now she loved another,
And on the summit of that hill she stood
Looking afar if yet her lover's steed
Kept pace with her expectancy, and flew.

III

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
There was an ancient mansion, and before

Its walls there was a steed caparisoned :
Within an antique Oratory stood
The Boy of whom I spake ;—he was alone,
And pale, and pacing to and fro : anon
He sate him down, and seized a pen, and traced
Words which I could not guess of ; then he leaned
His bowed head on his hands, and shook as 'twere
With a convulsion—then rose again,
And with his teeth and quivering hands did tear
What he had written, but he shed no tears.
And he did calm himself, and fix his brow
Into a kind of quiet : as he paused,
The Lady of his love re-entered there ;
She was serene and smiling then, and yet
She knew she was by him beloved ;—she knew—
For quickly comes such knowledge—that his heart
Was darkened with her shadow, and she saw
That he was wretched, but she saw not all.
He rose, and with a cold and gentle grasp
He took her hand ; a moment o'er his face
A tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced, and then it faded, as it came :
He dropped the hand he held, and with slow steps
Retired, but not as bidding her adieu,
For they did part with mutual smiles ; he passed
From out the massy gate of that old Hall,
And mounting on his steed he went his way ;
And ne'er repassed that hoary threshold more.

IV

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Boy was sprung to manhood : in the wilds
Of fiery climes he made himself a home,
And his soul drank their sunbeams : he was girt
With strange and dusky aspects ; he was not
Himself like what he had been ; on the sea
And on the shore he was a wanderer ;
There was a mass of many images
Crowded like waves upon me, but he was
A part of all ; and in the last he lay
Reposing from the noontide sultriness,
Couched, among fallen columns, in the shade
Of ruined walls that had survived the names
Of those who reared them ; by his sleeping side
Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds
Were fastened near a fountain ; and a man,
Clad in a flowing garb, did watch the while,

While many of his tribe slumbered around :
 And they were canopied by the blue sky,
 So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,
 That God alone was to be seen in heaven.

V

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
 The Lady of his love was wed with One
 Who did not love her better :—in her home,
 A thousand leagues from his—her native home,
 She dwelt, begirt with growing Infancy,
 Daughters and sons of Beauty—but behold !
 Upon her face there was the tint of grief,
 The settled shadow of an inward strife,
 And an unquiet drooping of the eye,
 As if its lid were charged with unshed tears,
 What could her grief be ?—she had all she loved,
 And he who had so loved her was not there
 To trouble with bad hopes, or evil wish,
 Or ill-repressed affliction, her pure thoughts.
 What could her grief be ?—she had loved him not,
 Nor given him cause to deem himself beloved,
 Nor could he be a part of that which preyed
 Upon her mind—a spectre of the past.

VI

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
 The Wanderer was returned.—I saw him stand
 Before an Altar—with a gentle bride ;
 Her face was fair, but was not that which made
 The Starlight of his Boyhood ;—as he stood
 Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came
 The selfsame aspect, and the quivering shock
 That in the antique Oratory shook
 His bosom in its solitude ; and then—
 As in that hour—a moment o'er his face
 The tablet of unutterable thoughts
 Was traced—and then it faded as it came,
 And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
 The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
 And all things reeled around him ; he could see
 Not that which was, nor that which should have been—
 But the old mansion, and the accustomed hall,
 And the remembered chambers, and the place,
 The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,
 All things pertaining to that place and hour,
 And her who was his destiny, came back

And thrust themselves between him and the light :
What business had they there at such a time ?

VII

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Lady of his love ;—oh ! she was changed,
As by the sickness of the soul ; her mind
Had wandered from its dwelling, and her eyes,
They had not their own lustre, but the look
Which is not of the earth ; she was become
The queen of a fantastic realm ; her thoughts
Were combinations of disjointed things ;
And forms impalpable and unperceived
Of others' sight familiar were to hers.
And this the world calls frenzy : but the wise
Have a far deeper madness, and the glance
Of melancholy is a fearful gift ;
What is it but the telescope of truth ?
Which strips the distance of its fantasies,
And brings life near in utter nakedness,
Making the cold reality too real !

VIII

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Wanderer was alone as heretofore,
The beings which surrounded him were gone,
Or were at war with him ; he was a mark
For blight and desolation, compassed round
With Hatred and Contention ; Pain was mixed
In all which was served up to him, until,
Like to the Pontic monarch of old days,
He fed on poisons, and they had no power,
But were a kind of nutriment ; he lived
Through that which had been death to many men,
And made him friends of mountains : with the stars
And the quick Spirit of the Universe
He held his dialogues ; and they did teach
To him the magic of their mysteries ;
To him the book of Night was opened wide,
And voices from the deep abyss revealed
A marvel and a secret.—Be it so.

IX

My dream is past : it had no further change.
It was of a strange order that the doom
Of these two creatures should be thus traced out
Almost like a reality—the one
To end in madness—both in misery.

THE LAMENT OF TASSO

ADVERTISEMENT

AT Ferrara, in the Library, are preserved the original manuscripts of Tasso's "Gierusalemme" and of Guarini's "Pastor Fido," with letters of Tasso, one from Titian to Ariosto, and the inkstand and chair, the tomb and house, of the latter. But, as misfortune has a greater interest for posterity, and little or none for the contemporary, the cell where Tasso was confined in the hospital of St. Anna attracts a more fixed attention than the residence or monument of Ariosto—at least it had this effect on me. There are two inscriptions, one on the outer gate, the second over the cell itself, inviting, unnecessarily, the wonder and the indignation of the spectator. Ferrara is much decayed and depopulated: the castle still exists entire; and I saw the court where Parisina and Hugo were beheaded, according to the annal of Gibbon.

I

LONG years!—It tries the thrilling frame to bear
And eagle-spirit of a child of Song—
Long years of outrage, calumny, and wrong;
Imputed madness, prisoned solitude,
And the mind's canker in its savage mood,
When the impatient thirst of light and air
Parches the heart; and the abhorred grate,
Marring the sunbeams with its hideous shade,
Works through the throbbing eyeball to the brain,
With a hot sense of heaviness and pain;
And bare, at once, Captivity displayed
Stands scoffing through the never-opened gate,
Which nothing through its bars admits, save day,
And tasteless food, which I have eat alone
Till its unsocial bitterness is gone;
And I can banquet like a beast of prey,
Sullen and lonely, couching in the cave
Which is my lair, and—it may be—my grave.
All this hath somewhat worn me, and may wear

But must be borne. I stoop not to despair ;
 For I have battled with mine agony,
 And made me wings wherewith to overfly
 The narrow circus of my dungeon wall,
 And freed the Holy Sepulchre from thrall :
 And revelled among men and things divine,
 And poured my spirit over Palestine,
 In honour of the sacred war for Him,
 The God who was on earth and is in heaven,
 For He has strengthened me in heart and limb.
 That through this sufferance I might be forgiven,
 I have employed my penance to record
 How Salem's shrine was won and how adored.

11

But this is o'er—my pleasant task is done :—
 My long-sustaining friend of many years !
 If I do blot thy final page with tears,
 Know, that my sorrows have wrung from me none.
 But thou, my young creation ! my soul's child !
 Which ever playing round me came and smiled,
 And wooed me from myself with thy sweet sight,
 Thou too art gone—and so is my delight :
 And therefore do I weep and inly bleed
 With this last bruise upon a broken reed.
 Thou too art ended—what is left me now ?
 For I have anguish yet to bear—and how ?
 I know not that—but in the innate force
 Of my own spirit shall be found resource.
 I have not sunk, for I had no remorse,
 Nor cause for such : they called me mad—and why ?
 O Leonora ! wilt not thou reply ?
 I was indeed delirious in my heart
 To lift my love so lofty as thou art ;
 But still my frenzy was not of the mind ;
 I knew my fault, and feel my punishment
 Not less because I suffer it unbent.
 That thou wert beautiful, and I not blind,
 Hath been the sin which shuts me from mankind ;
 But let them go, or torture as they will,
 My heart can multiply thine image still ;
 Successful love may sate itself away,
 The wretched are the faithful ; 'tis their fate
 To have all feeling save the one decay,
 And every passion into one dilate,
 As rapid rivers into ocean pour :
 But ours is fathomless, and hath no shore.

III

Above me, hark! the long and maniac cry
 Of minds and bodies in captivity,
 And hark! the lash and the increasing howl,
 And the half-inarticulate blasphemy!
 'There be some here with worse than frenzy foul,
 Some who do still goad on the o'erlaboured mind,
 And dim the little light that's left behind
 With needless torture, as their tyrant will
 Is wound up to the lust of doing ill:
 With these and with their victims am I classed,
 'Mid sounds and sights like these long years have passed:
 'Mid sounds and sights like these my life may close:
 So let it be—for then I shall repose.

IV

I have been patient, let me be so yet;
 I had forgotten half I would forget,
 But it revives—oh! would it were my lot
 To be forgetful as I am forgot!—
 Feel I not wroth with those who bade me dwell
 In this vast lazar-house of many woes?
 Where laughter is not mirth, nor thought the mind,
 Nor words a language, nor even men mankind;
 Where cries reply to curses, shrieks to blows,
 And each is tortured in his separate hell—
 For we are crowded in our solitudes—
 Many, but each divided by the wall,
 Which echoes madness in her babbling moods;—
 While all can hear, none heed his neighbour's call—
 None! save that one, the veriest wretch of all,
 Who was not made to be the mate of these,
 Nor bound between distraction and disease.
 Feel I not wroth with those who placed me here?
 Who have debased me in the minds of men,
 Debarring me the usage of my own,
 Blighting my life in best of its career,
 Branding my thoughts as things to shun and fear?
 Would I not pay them back these pangs again,
 And teach them inward sorrow's stifled groan?
 The struggle to be calm, and cold distress,
 Which undermines our Stoical success?
 No!—still too proud to be vindictive—I
 Have pardoned princes' insults, and would die.
 Yes, Sister of my Sovereign! for thy sake
 I weed all bitterness from out my breast,
 It hath no business where thou art a guest;

Thy brother hates—but I can not detest ;
 Thou pitiest not—but I can not forsake.

v

Look on a love which knows not to despair,
 But all unquenched is still my better part,
 Dwelling deep in my shut and silent heart,
 As dwells the gathered lightning in its cloud,
 Encompassed with its dark and rolling shroud,
 Till struck—forth flies the all-ethereal dart !
 And thus at the collision of thy name
 The vivid thought still flashes through my frame,
 And for a moment all things as they were
 Flit by me ;—they are gone—I am the same.
 And yet my love without ambition grew ;
 I knew thy state, my station, and I knew
 A Princess was no love-mate for a bard ;
 I told it not, I breathed it not, it was
 Sufficient to itself, its own reward ;
 And if my eyes revealed it, they, alas !
 Were punished by the silentness of thine,
 And yet I did not venture to repine.
 Thou wert to me a crystal-girded shrine
 Worshipped at holy distance, and around
 Hallowed and meekly kissed the saintly ground ;
 Not for thou wert a princess, but that Love
 Had robed thee with a glory, and arrayed
 Thy lineaments in a beauty that dismayed—
 Oh ! not dismayed—but awed, like One above !
 And in that sweet severity there was
 A something which all softness did surpass—
 I know not how—thy genius mastered mine—
 My star stood still before thee :—if it were
 Presumptuous thus to love without design,
 That sad fatality hath cost me dear ;
 But thou art dearest still, and I should be
 Fit for this cell, which wrongs me—but for thee.
 The very love which locked me to my chain
 Hath lightened half its weight ; and for the rest,
 Though heavy, lent me vigour to sustain,
 And look to thee with undivided breast,
 And foil the ingenuity of Pain.

vi

It is no marvel—from my very birth
 My soul was drunk with love—which did pervade
 And mingle with whate'er I saw on earth ;

Of objects all inanimate I made
 Idols, and out of wild and lonely flowers,
 And rocks, whereby they grew, a paradise,
 Where I did lay me down within the shade
 Of waving trees, and dreamed uncounted hours,
 Though I was chid for wandering; and the Wise
 Shook their white aged heads o'er me, and said
 Of such materials wretched men were made,
 And such a truant boy would end in woe,
 And that the only lesson was a blow;
 And then they smote me, and I did not weep,
 But cursed them in my heart, and to my haunt
 Returned and wept alone, and dreamed again
 The visions which arise without a sleep.
 And with my years my soul began to pant
 With feelings of strange tumult and soft pain;
 And the whole heart exhaled into One Want,
 But undefined and wandering, till the day
 I found the thing I sought—and that was thee;
 And then I lost my being all to be
 Absorbed in thine—the world was passed away—
 Thou didst annihilate the earth to me!

VII

I loved all Solitude—but little thought
 To spend I know not what of life, remote
 From all communion with existence, save
 The maniac and his tyrant;—had I been
 Their fellow, many years ere this had seen
 My mind like theirs corrupted to its grave,
 But who hath seen me writhe, or heard me rave?
 Perchance in such a cell we suffer more
 Than the wrecked sailor on his desert shore:
 The world is all before him—mine is here,
 Scarce twice the space they must accord my bier
 What though he perish, he may lift his eye
 And with a dying glance upbraid the sky—
 I will not raise my own in such reproof,
 Although 'tis clouded by my dungeon roof.

VIII

Yet do I feel at times my mind decline,
 But with a sense of its decay:—I see
 Unwonted lights along my prison shine,
 And a strange demon, who is vexing me
 With pilfering pranks and petty pains, below
 The feeling of the healthful and the free;

But much to one, who long hath suffered so,
 Sickness of heart, and narrowness of place,
 And all that may be borne, or can debase.
 I thought mine enemies had been but Man,
 But spirits may be leagued with them—all Earth
 Abandons—Heaven forgets me;—in the dearth
 Of such defence the Powers of Evil can,
 It may be, tempt me further—and prevail
 Against the outworn creature they assail.
 Why in this furnace is my spirit proved
 Like steel in tempering fire?—because I loved?
 Because I loved what not to love, and see,
 Was more or less than mortal, and than me.

IX

I once was quick in feeling—that is o'er;—
 My scars are callous, or I should have dashed
 My brain against these bars, as the sun flashed
 In mockery through them.—If I bear and bore
 The much I have recounted, and the more
 Which hath no words—'tis that I would not die
 And sanction with self-slaughter the dull lie
 Which snared me here, and with the brand of shame
 Stamp madness deep into my memory,
 And woo compassion to a blighted name,
 Sealing the sentence which my foes proclaim.
 No—it shall be immortal!—and I make
 A future temple of my present cell,
 Which nations yet shall visit for my sake.
 While thou, Ferrara! when no longer dwell
 The ducal chiefs within thee, shall fall down,
 And crumbling piecemeal view thy heartless halls,
 A poet's wreath shall be thine only crown—
 A poet's dungeon thy most far renown,
 While strangers wander o'er thy unpeopled walls!
 And thou, Leonora!—thou—who wert ashamed
 That such as I could love—who blushed to hear
 To less than monarchs that thou couldst be dear,
 Go! tell thy brother, that my heart, untamed
 By grief, years, weariness—and it may be
 A taint of that he would impute to me,
 From long infection of a den like this,
 Where the mind rots congenial with the abyss—
 Adores thee still;—and add—that when the towers
 And battlements which guard his joyous hours
 Of banquet, dance, and revel are forgot,
 Or left untended in a dull repose,

This—this—shall be a consecrated spot!
But thou—when all that Birth and Beauty throws
Of magic round thee is extinct—shalt have
One half the laurel which o'ershades my grave.
No power in death can tear our names apart,
As none in life could rend thee from my heart.
Yes, Leonora! it shall be our fate
To be entwined forever—but too late!

MAZEPPA

I

'Twas after dread Pultowa's day,
When fortune left the royal Swede,
Around a slaughtered army lay,
No more to combat and to bleed.
The power and glory of the war,
Faithless as their vain votaries, men,
Had passed to the triumphant Czar,
And Moscow's walls were safe again,
Until a day more dark and drear,
And a more memorable year,
Should give to slaughter and to shame
A mightier host and haughtier name;
A greater wreck, a deeper fall,
A shock to one—a thunderbolt to all.

II

Such was the hazard of the die;
The wounded Charles was taught to fly
By day and night, through field and flood,
Stained with his own and subjects' blood;
For thousands fell that flight to aid:
And not a voice was heard to upbraid
Ambition in his humbled hour,
When truth had naught to dread from power.
His horse was slain, and Gieta gave
His own—and died the Russian's slave.
This too sinks after many a league
Of well-sustained, but vain fatigue;
And in the depth of forests, darkling
The watch-fires in the distance sparkling—
The beacons of surrounding foes—
A king must lay his limbs at length.

Are these the laurels and repose
For which the nations strain their strength?
They lay him by a savage tree,
In outworn nature's agony;
His wounds were stiff—his limbs were stark—
The heavy hour was chill and dark;
The fever in his blood forbade
A transient slumber's fitful aid:
And thus it was; but yet through all,
Kinglike the monarch bore his fall,
And made, in this extreme of ill,
His pangs the vassals of his will:
All silent and subdued were they,
As once the nations round him lay.

III

A band of chiefs!—alas, how few,
Since but the fleeting of a day
Had thinned it; but this wreck was true
And chivalrous: upon the clay
Each sate him down, all sad and mute,
Beside his monarch and his steed,
For danger levels man and brute,
And all are fellows in their need.
Among the rest, Mazeppa made
His pillow in an old oak's shade—
Himself as rough, and scarce less old,
The Ukraine's Hetman, calm and bold;
But first, outspent with this long course,
The Cossack prince rubbed down his horse,
And made for him a leafy bed,
And smoothed his fetlocks and his mane,
And slacked his girth, and stripped his rein,
And joyed to see how well he fed;
For until now he had the dread
His wearied courser might refuse
To browse beneath the midnight dews:
But he was hardy as his lord,
And little cared for bed and board;
But spirited and docile too,
Whate'er was to be done, would do.
Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb,
All Tartar-like he carried him;
Obeyed his voice, and came at call,
And knew him in the midst of all:
Though thousands were around—and Night,
Without a star, pursued her flight—

That steed from sunset until dawn
His chief would follow like a fawn.

IV

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,
And laid his lance beneath his oak,
Felt if his arms in order good
The long day's march had well withstood—
If still the powder filled the pan,
And flints unloosened kept their lock—
His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,
And whether they had chafed his belt ;—
And next the venerable man,
From out his haversack and can,
Prepared and spread his slender stock ;
And to the monarch and his men
The whole or portion offered then,
With far less of inquietude
Than courtiers at a banquet would.
And Charles of this his slender share
With smiles partook a moment there
To force of cheer a greater show,
And seem above both wounds and woe ;—
And then he said : " Of all our band,
Though firm of heart and strong of hand,
In skirmish, march, or forage, none
Can less have said or more have done
Than thee, Mazeppa ! On the earth
So fit a pair had never birth,
Since Alexander's days till now,
As thy Bucephalus and thou ;
All Scythia's fame to thine should yield,
For pricking on o'er flood and field."
Mazeppa answered : " Ill betide
The school wherein I learned to ride !"
Quoth Charles : " Old Hetman, wherefore so,
Since thou hast learned the art so well ?"
Mazeppa said : " 'Twere long to tell ;
And we have many a league to go,
With every now and then a blow,
And ten to one at least the foe,
Before our steeds may graze at ease
Beyond the swift Borysthenes :
And, sire, your limbs have need of rest,
And I will be the sentinel
Of this your troop."—" But I request,"
Said Sweden's monarch, " thou wilt tell

This tale of thine, and I may reap,
 Perchance, from this the boon of sleep;
 For at this moment from my eyes
 The hope of present slumber flies."

"Well, sire, with such a hope I'll track
 My seventy years of memory back:
 I think 'twas in my twentieth spring—
 Ay, 'twas—when Casimir was king—
 John Casimir—I was his page
 Six summers in my earlier age:
 A learned monarch, faith! was he,
 And most unlike your Majesty:
 He made no wars, and did not gain
 New realms to lose them back again;
 And (save debates in Warsaw's Diet)
 He reigned in most unseemly quiet:
 Not that he had no cares to vex;
 He loved the muses and the sex:
 And sometimes these so froward are,
 They made him wish himself at war;
 But soon his wrath being o'er, he took
 Another mistress, or new book:
 And then he gave prodigious fêtes—
 All Warsaw gathered round his gates
 To gaze upon his splendid court,
 And dames, and chiefs, of princely port;
 He was the Polish Solomon,
 So sung his poets, all but one,
 Who, being unpensioned, made a satire,
 And boasted that he could not flatter.
 It was a court of jousts and mimes,
 Where every courtier tried at rhymes:
 Even I for once produced some verses,
 And signed my odes "Despairing Thyrsis."
 There was a certain Palatine,
 A Count of far and high descent,
 Rich as a salt or silver mine:¹
 And he was proud, ye may divine,
 As if from heaven he had been sent:
 He had such wealth in blood and ore
 As few could match beneath the throne;
 And he would gaze upon his store,
 And o'er his pedigree would pore,
 Until by some confusion led,
 Which almost looked like want of head,
 He thought their merits were his own.

His wife was not of his opinion—
 His junior she by thirty years—
 Grew daily tired of his dominion,
 And after wishes, hopes, and fears,
 'To virtue a few farewell tears,
 A restless dream or two, some glances
 At Warsaw's youth, some songs, and dances,
 Awaited but the usual chances,
 Those happy accidents which render
 The coldest dames so very tender,
 To deck her Count with titles given,
 'Tis said, as passports into heaven ;
 But, strange to say, they rarely boast
 Of these, who have deserved them most.

v

"I was a goodly stripling then :
 At seventy years I so may say,
 That there were few, or boys or men,
 Who, in my dawning time of day,
 Of vassal or of knight's degree,
 Could vie in vanities with me ;
 For I had strength, youth, gaiety,
 A port, not like to this ye see,
 But smooth, as all is rugged now ;
 For time, and care, and war have ploughed
 My very soul from out my brow ;
 And thus I should be disavowed
 By all my kind and kin, could they
 Compare my day and yesterday.
 This change was wrought, too, long ere age
 Had ta'en my features for his page :
 With years, ye know, have not declined
 My strength, my courage, or my mind,
 Or at this hour I should not be
 Telling old tales beneath a tree,
 With starless skies my canopy.
 But let me on : Theresa's form—
 Methinks it glides before me now,
 Between me and yon chestnut's bough,
 The memory is so quick and warm ;
 And yet I find no words to tell
 The shape of her I loved so well :
 She had the Asiatic eye,
 Such as our Turkish neighbourhood
 Hath mingled with our Polish blood,
 Dark as above us is the sky ;

But through it stole a tender light,
 Like the first moonlight of midnight ;
 Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,
 Which seemed to melt to its own beam ;
 All love, half languor, and half fire,
 Like saints that at the stake expire,
 And lift their raptured looks on high,
 As though it were a joy to die.
 A brow like a midsummer lake,
 Transparent with the sun therein,
 When waves no murmur dare to make,
 And heaven beholds her face within.
 A cheek and lip—but why proceed ?
 I loved her then—I love her still ;
 And such as I am, love indeed
 In fierce extremes—in good and ill.
 But still we love even in our rage,
 And haunted to our very age
 With the vain shadow of the past,
 As is Mazeppa to the last.

VI

“ We met—we gazed—I saw, and sighed ;
 She did not speak, and yet replied ;
 There are ten thousand tones and signs
 We hear and see, but none defines—
 Involuntary sparks of thought,
 Which strike from out the heart o’erwrought,
 And form a strange intelligence,
 Alike mysterious and intense,
 Which link the burning chain that binds,
 Without their will, young hearts and minds,
 Conveying, as the electric wire,
 We know not how, the absorbing fire.—
 I saw, and sighed—in silence wept,
 And still reluctant distance kept,
 Until I was made known to her,
 And we might then and there confer
 Without suspicion—then, even then,
 I longed, and was resolved to speak ;
 But on my lips they died again,
 The accents tremulous and weak,
 Until one hour.—There is a game,
 A frivolous and foolish play,
 Wherewith we while away the day ;
 It is—I have forgot the name—
 And we to this, it seems, were set,

By some strange chance, which I forget :
I recked not if I won or lost,

It was enough for me to be
So near to hear, and oh ! to see
The being whom I loved the most.
I watched her as a sentinel,
(May ours this dark night watch as well !).

Until I saw, and thus it was,
That she was pensive, nor perceived
Her occupation, nor was grieved
Nor glad to lose or gain : but still
Played on for hours, as if her will
Yet bound her to the place, though not
That hers might be the winning lot.

Then through my brain the thought did pass,
Even as a flash of lightning there,
That there was something in her air
Which would not doom me to despair ;
And on the thought my words broke forth,

All incoherent as they were—
Their eloquence was little worth,
But yet she listened—'tis enough—
Who listens once will listen twice ;
Her heart, be sure, is not of ice,
And one refusal no rebuff.

VII

" I loved, and was beloved again—
They tell me, sire, you never knew
Those gentle frailties ; if 'tis true,
I shorten all my joy or pain ;
To you 'twould seem absurd as vain ;
But all men are not born to reign,
Or o'er their passions, or as you
Thus o'er themselves and nations too.
I am—or rather was—a prince,
A chief of thousands, and could lead
Them on where each would foremost bleed ;
But could not o'er myself evince
The like control.—But to resume :
I loved and was beloved again ;
In sooth it is a happy doom,
But yet where happiest ends in pain.—
We met in secret, and the hour
Which led me to that lady's bower
Was fiery Expectation's dower.
My days and nights were nothing—all

Except that hour which doth recall
 In the long lapse from youth to age
 No other like itself—I'd give
 The Ukraine back again to live
 It o'er once more, and be a page,
 The happy page, who was the lord
 Of one soft heart, and his own sword,
 And had no other gem nor wealth
 Save Nature's gift of youth and health.—
 We met in secret—doubly sweet,
 Some say, they find it so to meet;
 I know not that—I would have given
 My life but to have called her mine
 In the full view of earth and heaven;
 For I did oft and long repine
 That we could only meet by stealth.

VIII

"For lovers there are many eyes,
 And such there were on us;—the devil
 On such occasions should be civil—
 The devil!—I'm loath to do him wrong;
 It might be some untoward saint
 Who would not be at rest too long,
 But to his pious bile give vent—
 But one fair night, some lurking spies
 Surprised and seized us both
 The Count was something more than wroth—
 I was unarmed; but if in steel,
 All cap-à-pie from head to heel,
 What 'gainst their numbers could I do—
 'Twas near his castle, far away
 From city or from succour near,
 And almost on the break of day;
 I did not think to see another,
 My moments seemed reduced to few:
 And with one prayer to Mary Mother,
 And it may be a saint or two,
 As I resigned me to my fate,
 They led me to the castle-gate:
 Theresa's doom I never knew,
 Our lot was henceforth separate.—
 An angry man, ye may opine,
 Was he, the proud Count Palatine;
 And he had reason good to be,
 But he was most enraged lest such
 An accident should chance to touch

Upon his future pedigree;
 Nor less amazed that such a blot
 His noble 'scutcheon should have got,
 While he was highest of his line;
 Because unto himself he seemed
 The first of men, nor less he deemed
 In others' eyes, and most in mine.
 'Sdeath, with a page—perchance a king
 Had reconciled him to the thing;
 But with a stripling of a page—
 I felt—but can not paint his rage.

IX

“‘Bring forth the horse!’ The horse was brought;
 In truth he was a noble steed,
 A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,
 Who looked as though the speed of thought
 Were in his limbs; but he was wild,
 Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,
 With spur and bridle undefiled—
 'Twas but a day he had been caught;
 And snorting, with erected mane,
 And struggling fiercely, but in vain,
 In the full foam of wrath and dread
 To me the desert-born was led;
 They bound me on, that menial throng,
 Upon his back with many a thong;
 Then loosed him with a sudden lash—
 Away!—away!—and on we dash!—
 Torrents less rapid and less rash.

X

“Away!—away!—my breath was gone—
 I saw not where he hurried on:
 'Twas scarcely yet the break of day,
 And on he foamed—away!—away!—
 The last of human sounds which rose,
 As I was darted from my foes,
 Was the wild shout of savage laughter,
 Which on the wind came roaring after
 A moment from that rabble rout:
 With sudden wrath I wrenched my head,
 And snapped the cord which to the mane
 Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,
 And, writhing half my form about,
 Howled back my curse; but midst the tread,
 The thunder of my courser's speed,

Perchance they did not hear nor heed :
 It vexes me—for I would fain
 Have paid their insult back again.
 I paid it well in after-days :
 There is not of that castle-gate,
 Its drawbridge and portcullis weight,
 Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left ;
 Nor of its field a blade of grass,
 Save what grows on a ridge of wall,
 Where stood the hearthstone of the hall ;
 And many a time ye there might pass,
 Nor dream that e'er that fortress was ;
 I saw its turrets in a blaze,
 Their crackling battlements all cleft,
 And the hot lead pour down like rain
 From off the scorched and blackening roof,
 Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof.
 They little thought that day of pain,
 When launched, as on the lightning's flash,
 They bade me to destruction dash,
 That one day I should come again,
 With twice five thousand horse, to thank
 The Count for his uncourteous ride.
 They played me then a bitter prank,
 When, with the wild horse for my guide,
 They bound me to his foaming flank :
 At length I played them one as frank—
 For time at last sets all things even—
 And if we do but watch the hour,
 There never yet was human power
 Which could evade, if unforgiven,
 The patient search and vigil long.
 Of him who treasures up a wrong.

XI

" Away, away, my steed and I,
 Upon the pinions of the wind,
 All human dwellings left behind ;
 We sped like meteors through the sky,
 When with its crackling sound the night
 Is checkered with the northern light ;
 Town—village—none were on our track,
 But a wild plain of far extent,
 And bounded by a forest black ;
 And, save the scarce seen battlement
 On distant heights of some stronghold,
 Against the Tartars built of old,

No trace of man. The year before
 A Turkish army had marched o'er;
 And where the Spahi's hoof hath trod,
 The verdure flies the bloody sod;—
 The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,
 And a low breeze crept moaning by—

I could have answered with a sigh—
 But fast we fled, away, away—
 And I could neither sigh nor pray;
 And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain
 Upon the courser's bristling mane;
 But, snorting still with rage and fear,
 He flew upon his far career:

At times I almost thought, indeed,
 He must have slackened in his speed;
 But no—my bound and slender frame

Was nothing to his angry might,
 And merely like a spur became:
 Each motion which I made to free
 My swollen limbs from their agony

Increased his fury and affright:
 I tried my voice—'twas faint and low,
 But yet he swerved as from a blow;
 And, starting to each accent, sprang
 As from a sudden trumpet's clang;
 Meantime my cords were wet with gore,
 Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er,
 And in my tongue the thirst became
 A something fierier than flame.

XII

"We neared the wild wood—'twas so wide,
 I saw no bounds on either side;
 'Twas studded with old sturdy trees,
 That bent not to the roughest breeze
 Which howls down from Siberia's waste,
 And strips the forest in its haste—
 But these were few and far between,
 Set thick with shrubs more young and green,
 Luxuriant with their annual leaves,
 Ere strewn by those autumnal eves
 That nip the forest's foliage dead,
 Discoloured with a lifeless red,
 Which stands thereon, like stiffened gore
 Upon the slain when battle's o'er,
 And some long winter's night hath shed
 Its frosts o'er every tombless head,

So cold and stark the raven's beak
May peck unpierced each frozen cheek :
'Twas a wild waste of underwood,
And here and there a chestnut stood,
The strong oak, and the hardy pine ;
But far apart—and well it were,
Or else a different lot were mine—

The boughs gave way, and did not tear
My limbs ; and I found strength to bear
My wounds, already scarred with cold—
My bonds forbade to loose my hold.
We rustled through the leaves like wind,
Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind ;
By night I heard them on the track,
Their troop came hard upon our back,
With their long gallop, which can tire
The hound's deep hate and hunter's fire :
Where'er we flew they followed on,
Nor left us with the morning sun ;
Behind I saw them, scarce a rood,
At daybreak winding through the wood,
And through the night had heard their feet
Their stealing, rustling step repeat.
Oh ! how I wished for spear or sword,
At least to die amidst the horde,
And perish—if it must be so—
At bay, destroying many a foe !
When first my courser's race begun,
I wished the goal already won ;
But now I doubted strength and speed.
Vain doubt ! his swift and savage breed
Had nerved him like the mountain roe ;
Nor faster falls the blinding snow
Which whelms the peasant near the door
Whose threshold he shall cross no more,
Bewildered with the dazzling blast,
Than through the forest-paths he passed—
Untired, untamed, and worse than wild ;
All furious as a favoured child
Balked of its wish ; or fiercer still—
A woman piqued—who has her will.

XIII

“The wood was passed ; 'twas more than noon,
But chill the air, although in June ;
Or it might be my veins ran cold—
Prolonged endurance tames the bold ;

And I was then not what I seem,
But headlong as a wintry stream,
And wore my feelings out before
I well could count their causes o'er ;
And what with fury, fear, and wrath,
The tortures which beset my path,
Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,
Thus bound in nature's nakedness ;
Sprung from a race whose rising blood,
When stirred beyond its calmer mood,
And trodden hard upon, is like
The rattlesnake's, in act to strike,
What marvel if this worn-out trunk,
Beneath its woes a moment sunk ?
The earth gave way, the skies rolled round,
I seemed to sink upon the ground ;
But erred, for I was fastly bound.
My heart turned sick, my brain grew sore,
And throbbed awhile, then beat no more :
The skies spun like a mighty wheel ;
I saw the trees like drunkards reel,
And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,
Which saw no further : he who dies
Can die no more than then I died.
O'ertortured by that ghastly ride,
I felt the blackness come and go,
And strove to wake ; but could not make
My senses climb up from below :
I felt as on a plank at sea,
When all the waves that dash o'er thee
At the same time upheave and whelm,
And hurl thee toward a desert realm,
My undulating life was as
The fancied lights that flitting pass
Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when
Fever begins upon the brain ;
But soon it passed, with little pain,
But a confusion worse than such ;
I own that I should deem it much,
Dying, to feel the same again ;
And yet I do suppose we must
Feel far more ere we turn to dust :
No matter ; I have bared my brow
Full in Death's face—before—and now.

XIV

“ My thoughts came back ; where was I ?
Cold,
And numb, and giddy ; pulse by pulse
Life reassumed its lingering hold,
And throb by throb ; till grown a pang
Which for a moment could convulse,
My blood reflowed, though thick and chill ;
My ear with uncouth noises rang,
My heart began once more to thrill ;
My sight returned, though dim, alas !
And thickened, as it were with glass.
Methought the dash of waves was nigh ;
There was a gleam, too, of the sky
Studded with stars ;—it is no dream ;
The wild horse swims the wilder stream !
The bright, broad river’s gushing tide
Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,
And we are half-way, struggling o’er
To yon unknown and silent shore.
The waters broke my hollow trance,
And with a temporary strength
My stiffened limbs were rebaptized.
My courser’s broad breast proudly braves
And dashes off the ascending waves,
And onward we advance !
We reach the slippery shore at length,
A haven I but little prized,
For all behind was dark and drear,
And all before was night and fear.
How many hours of night or day
In those suspended pangs I lay,
I could not tell ; I scarcely knew
If this were human breath I drew.

XV

“ With glossy skin, and dripping mane,
And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,
The wild steed’s sinewy nerves still strain
Up the repelling bank.
We gain the top ; a boundless plain
Spreads through the shadow of the night,
And onward, onward, onward seems,
Like precipices in our dreams,
To stretch beyond the sight ;
And here and there a speck of white,
Or scattered spot of dusky green,

In masses broke into the light,
 As rose the moon upon my right :
 But naught distinctly seen
 In the dim waste would indicate
 The omen of a cottage gate ;
 No twinkling taper from afar
 Stood like a hospitable star ;
 Not even an ignis-fatuus rose
 To make him merry with my woes ;
 That very cheat had cheered me then !
 Although detected, welcome still,
 Reminding me, through every ill,
 Of the abodes of men.

XVI

“ Onward we went, but slack and slow ;
 His savage force at length o’erspent,
 The drooping courser, faint and low,
 Or feebly foaming went.
 A sickly infant had had power
 To guide him forward in that hour ;
 But useless all to me :
 His new-born tameness naught availed,
 My limbs were bound ; my force had failed,
 Perchance, had they been free.
 With feeble effort still I tried
 To rend the bonds so starkly tied—
 But still it was in vain ;
 My limbs were only wrung the more,
 And soon the idle strife gave o’er,
 Which but prolonged their pain :
 The dizzy race seemed almost done,
 Although no goal was nearly won :
 Some streaks announced the coming sun—
 How slow, alas, he came !
 Methought that mist of dawning gray
 Would never dapple into day ;
 How heavily it rolled away—
 Before the eastern flame
 Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,
 And called the radiance from their cars,
 And filled the earth, from his deep throne
 With lonely lustre, all his own.

XVII

“ Up rose the sun : the mists were curled
 Back from the solitary world

Which lay around—behind—before:
What bootéd it to traverse o'er
Plain, forest, river? Man nor brute,
Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,
Lay in the wild luxuriant soil;
No sign of travel—none of toil;
The very air was mute;
And not an insect's shrill small horn,
Nor matin bird's new voice, was borne
From herb nor thicket. Many a werst,
Panting as if his heart would burst,
The weary brute still staggered on;
And still we were—or seemed—alone:
At length, while reeling on our way,
Methought I heard a courser neigh,
From out yon tuft of blackened firs.
Is it the wind those branches stirs?
No, no! from out the forest prance

A trampling troop; I see them come!
In one vast squadron they advance!

I strove to cry—my lips were dumb.
The steeds rush on in plunging pride;
But where are they the reins to guide?
A thousand horse and none to ride!
With flowing tail, and flying mane!
Wide nostrils never stretched by pain,
Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,
And feet that iron never shod,
And flanks unscarred by spur or rod,
A thousand horse, the wild, the free,
Like waves that follow o'er the sea,
Came quickly thundering on,

As if our faint approach to meet;
The sight renerved my courser's feet,
A moment staggering, feebly fleet,
A moment, with a faint low neigh,
He answered, and then fell;

With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,
And reeking limbs immovable,

His first and last career is done!
On came the troop—they saw him stoop,
They saw me strangely bound along

His back with many a bloody thong:
They stop—they start—they snuff the air,
Gallop a moment here and there,
Approach, retire, wheel round and round,
Then plunging back with sudden bound,

Headed by one black mighty steed,
 Who seemed the patriarch of his breed,
 Without a single speck or hair
 Of white upon his shaggy hide :
 They snort—they foam—neigh—swerve aside,
 And backward to the forest fly,
 By instinct, from a human eye—

They left me there to my despair,
 Linked to the dead and stiffening wretch,
 Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,
 Relieved from that unwonted weight,
 From whence I could not extricate
 Nor him, nor me;—and there we lay,
 The dying on the dead !

I little deemed another day
 Would see my houseless, helpless head.

“ And there from morn till twilight bound,
 I felt the heavy hours toil round,
 With just enough of life to see
 My last of suns go down on me,
 In hopeless certainty of mind,
 That makes us feel at length resigned
 To that which our foreboding years
 Present the worst and last of fears :
 Inevitable—even a boon,
 Nor more unkind for coming soon ;
 Yet shunned and dreaded with such care,
 As if it only were a snare

That prudence might escape :
 At times both wished for and implored,
 At times sought with self-pointed sword,
 Yet still a dark and hideous close
 To even intolerable woes,

And welcome in no shape.
 And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure,
 They who have revelled beyond measure
 In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,
 Die calm, or calmer, oft than he
 Whose heritage was misery :

For he who hath in turn run through
 All that was beautiful and new,

Hath naught to hope, and naught to leave ;
 And, save the future (which is viewed
 Not quite as men are base or good,
 But as their nerves may be endured),

With naught perhaps to grieve :—

The wretch still hopes his woes must end,
And Death, whom he should deem his friend,
Appears to his distempered eyes,
Arrived to rob him of his prize,
The tree of his new Paradise.
To-morrow would have given him all,
Repaid his pangs, repaired his fall :
To-morrow would have been the first
Of days no more deplored or curst,
But bright, and long, and beckoning years,
Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,
Guerdon of many a painful hour ;
To-morrow would have given him power
To rule, to shine, to smite, to save—
And must it dawn upon his grave ?

XVIII

“ The sun was sinking—still I lay
Chained to the chill and stiffening steed ;
I thought to mingle there our clay,
And my dim eyes of death had need,
No hope arose of being freed :
I cast my last looks up the sky,
And there between me and the sun
I saw the expecting raven fly,
Who scarce would wait till both should die,
Ere his repast begun ;
He flew, and perched, then flew once more,
And each time nearer than before ;
I saw his wing through twilight flit,
And once so near me he alit
I could have smote, but lacked the strength ;
But the slight motion of my hand,
And feeble scratching of the sand,
The exerted throat's faint struggling noise,
Which scarcely could be called a voice,
Together scared him off at length.—
I know no more—my latest dream
Is something of a lovely star
Which fixed my dull eyes from afar,
And went and came with wandering beam,
And of the cold, dull, swimming, dense
Sensation of recurring sense,
And then subsiding back to death,
And then again a little breath,
A little thrill, a short suspense,
An icy sickness curdling o'er

My heart, and sparks that crossed my brain,
A gasp, a throb, a start of pain,
A sigh, and nothing more.

.XIX

"I woke—Where was I?—Do I see
A human face look down on me?
And doth a roof above me close?
Do these limbs on a couch repose?
Is this a chamber where I lie?
And is it mortal, yon bright eye,
That watches me with gentle glance?"

I close my own again once more,
As doubtful that the former trance

Could not as yet be o'er.

A slender girl, long-haired and tall,
Sate watching by the cottage wall;
The sparkle of her eye I caught,
Even with my first return of thought;
Forever and anon she threw

A prying, pitying glance on me

With her black eyes so wild and free;

I gazed, and gazed, until I knew

No vision it could be—

But that I lived, and was released
From adding to the vulture's feast:
And when the Cossack maid beheld
My heavy eyes at length unsealed,
She smiled—and I essayed to speak,

But failed—and she approached, and made

With lips and finger signs that said,

I must not strive as yet to break

The silence, till my strength should be

Enough to leave my accents free;

And then her hand on mine she laid,

And smoothed the pillow for my head,

And stole along on tiptoe tread,

And gently oped the door, and spake

In whispers—ne'er was voice so sweet!

Even music followed her light feet;—

But those she called were not awake,

And she went forth; but ere she passed,

Another look on me she cast,

Another sign she made, to say

That I had naught to fear, that all

Were near, at my command or call,

And she would not delay

Her due return :—while she was gone,
Methought I felt too much alone.

xx

“She came with mother and with sire—
What need of more!—I will not tire
With long recital of the rest
Since I became the Cossack’s guest.
They found me senseless on the plain—
They bore me to the nearest hut—
They brought me into life again—
Me—one day o’er their realm to reign!
Thus the vain fool who strove to glut
His rage, refining on my pain,
Sent me forth to the wilderness,
Bound, naked, bleeding, and alone,
To pass the desert to a throne—
What mortal his own doom may guess?—
Let none despond, let none despair!
To-morrow the Borysthenes
May see our coursers graze at ease
Upon his Turkish land—and never
Had I such welcome for a river
As I shall yield when safely there.
Comrades, good-night!”—The Hetman threw
His length beneath the oak-tree shade,
With leafy couch already made,
A bed nor comfortless nor new
To him, who took his rest whene’er
The hour arrived, no matter where:
His eyes the hastening slumbers steep.
And if ye marvel Charles forgot
To thank his tale, he wondered not—
The king had been an hour asleep.

NOTE

¹ This comparison of a “salt mine” may, perhaps, be permitted to a Pole, as the wealth of the country consists greatly in salt mines.

THE ISLAND

OR

CHRISTIAN AND HIS COMRADES

ADVERTISEMENT

THE foundation of the following story will be found partly in Lieutenant Bligh's "Narrative of the Mutiny and Seizure of the *Bounty*, in the South Seas, in 1789"; and partly in "Mariner's Account of the Tonga Islands."

GENOA, 1823.

CANTO THE FIRST

I

THE morning watch was come; the vessel lay
Her course, and gently made her liquid way;
The cloven billow flashed from off her prow
In furrows formed by that majestic plough;
The waters with their world were all before;
Behind, the South Sea's many an islet shore.
The quiet night, now dappling, 'gan to wane,
Dividing darkness from the dawning main;
The dolphins, not unconscious of the day,
Swam high, as eager of the coming ray;
The stars from broader beams began to creep,
And lift their shining eyelids from the deep;
The sail resumed its lately shadowed white,
And the wind fluttered with a freshening flight;
The purpling ocean owns the coming sun,
But ere he break—a deed is to be done.

II

The gallant chief within his cabin slept,
Secure in those by whom the watch was kept:

His dreams were of old England's welcome shore,
Of toils rewarded, and of dangers o'er;
His name was added to the glorious roll
Of those who search the storm-surrounded Pole.
The worst was over, and the rest seemed sure,
And why should not his slumber be secure?
Alas! his deck was trod by unwilling feet,
And wilder hands would hold the vessel's sheet;
Young hearts, which languished for some sunny isle,
Where summer years and summer women smile;
Men without country, who, too long estranged,
Had found no native home, or found it changed,
And, half uncivilized, preferred the cave
Of some soft savage to the uncertain wave—
The gushing fruits that nature gave untilld;
The wood without a path but where they willed;
The field o'er which promiscuous Plenty poured
Her horn; the equal land without a lord;
The wish—which ages have not yet subdued
In man—to have no master save his mood;
The earth, whose mine was on its face, unsold,
The glowing sun and produce all its gold;
The freedom which can call each grot a home;
The general garden, where all steps may roam,
Where Nature owns a nation as her child,
Exulting in the enjoyment of the wild;
Their shells, their fruits, the only wealth they know,
Their unexploring navy, the canoe;
Their sport, the dashing breakers and the chase;
Their strangest sight, an European face:—
Such was the country which these strangers yearned
To see again; a sight they dearly earned.

III

Awake, bold Bligh! the foe is at the gate!
Awake! awake!—Alas! it is too late!
Fiercely beside thy cot the mutineer
Stands, and proclaims the reign of rage and fear.
Thy limbs are bound, the bayonet at thy breast,
The hands, which trembled at thy voice, arrest:
Dragged o'er the deck, no more at thy command
The obedient helm shall veer, the sail expand;
That savage spirit, which would lull by wrath
Its desperate escape from duty's path,
Glares round thee, in the scarce believing eyes
Of those who fear the chief they sacrifice:
For ne'er can man his conscience all assuage,
Unless he drain the wine of passion—rage.

IV

In vain, not silenced by the eye of death,
Thou call'st the loyal with thy menaced breath:—
They come not; they are few, and, overawed,
Must acquiesce, while sterner hearts applaud.
In vain thou dost demand the cause: a curse
Is all the answer, with the threat of worse.
Full in thine eyes is waved the glittering blade,
Close to thy throat the pointed bayonet laid.
The levelled muskets circle round thy breast
In hands as steeled to do the deadly rest.
Thou dar'st them to their worst, exclaiming—"Fire!"
But they who pitied not could yet admire;
Some lurking remnant of their former awe
Restrained them longer than their broken law;
They would not dip their souls at once in blood,
But left thee to the mercies of the flood.

V

"Hoist out the boat!" was now the leader's cry;
And who dare answer "No!" to Mutiny,
In the first dawning of the drunken hour,
The Saturnalia of unhopèd-for power?
The boat is lowered with all the haste of hate,
With its slight plank between thee and thy fate;
Her only cargo such a scant supply
As promises the death their hands deny;
And just enough of water and of bread
To keep, some days, the dying from the dead:
Some cordage, canvas, sails, and lines, and twine,
But treasures all to hermits of the brine,
Were added after, to the earnest prayer
Of those who saw no hope, save sea and air;
And last, that trembling vassal of the Pole—
The feeling compass—Navigation's soul.

VI

And now the self-elected chief finds time
To stun the first sensation of his crime,
And raise it in his followers—"Ho! the bowl!"
Lest passion should return to reason's shoal.
"Brandy for heroes!" Burke could once exclaim—¹
No doubt a liquid path to epic fame;
And such the new-born heroes found it here,
And drained the draught with an applauding cheer.
"Huzza! for Otaheite!" was the cry.
How strange such shouts from sons of Mutiny!

The gentle island, and the genial soil,
The friendly hearts, the feasts without a toil,
The courteous manners but from nature caught,
The wealth unhoarded, and the love unbought;
Could these have charms for rudest sea-boys, driven
Before the mast by every wind of heaven?
And now, even now prepared with others' woes
To earn mild virtue's vain desire, repose?
Alas! such is our nature! all but aim
At the same end by pathways not the same;
Our means, our birth, our nation, and our name,
Our fortune, temper, even our outward frame,
Are far more potent o'er our yielding clay
Than aught we know beyond our little day.
Yet still there whispers the small voice within,
Heard through Gain's silence, and o'er Glory's din:
Whatever creed be taught, or land be trod,
Man's conscience is the oracle of God.

VII

The launch is crowded with the faithful few
Who wait their chief, a melancholy crew:
But some remained reluctant on the deck
Of that proud vessel—now a moral wreck—
And viewed their captain's fate with piteous eyes:
While others scoffed his augured miseries,
Sneered at the prospect of his pygmy sail
And the slight bark so laden and so frail,
The tender Nautilus, who steers his prow,
The sea-born sailor of his shell canoe,
The ocean Mab, the fairy of the sea,
Seems far less fragile, and, alas! more free.
He, when the lightning-winged tornadoes sweep
The surge, is safe—his port is in the deep—
And triumphs o'er the armadas of mankind,
Which shake the world, yet crumble in the wind.

VIII

When all was now prepared, the vessel clear
Which hailed her master in the mutineer—
A seaman, less obdurate than his mates,
Showed the vain pity which but irritates;
Watched his late chieftain with exploring eye,
And told, in signs, repentant sympathy;
Held the moist shaddock to his parched mouth,
Which felt exhaustion's deep and bitter drouth.
But soon observed, this guardian was withdrawn,

Nor further mercy clouds rebellion's dawn.
Then forward stepped the bold and froward boy
His chief had cherished only to destroy,
And, pointing to the helpless prow beneath,
Exclaimed, "Depart at once! delay is death!"
Yet then, even then, his feelings ceased not all:
In that last moment could a word recall
Remorse for the black deed as yet half done,
And what he hid from many showed to one:
When Bligh in stern reproach demanded where
Was now his grateful sense of former care?
Where all his hopes to see his name aspire,
And blazon Britain's thousand glories higher?
His feverish lips thus broke their gloomy spell:
"'Tis that! 'tis that! I am in hell! in hell!"
No more he said; but urging to the bark
His chief, commits him to the fragile ark;
These the sole accents from his tongue that fell,
But volumes lurked below his fierce farewell.

IX

The arctic sun rose broad above the wave;
The breeze now sank, now whispered from his cave;
As on Æolian harp, his fitful wings
Now swelled, now fluttered o'er his ocean strings.
With slow, despairing oar, the abandoned skiff,
Ploughs its drear progress to the scarce seen cliff,
Which lifts its peak a cloud above the main:
That boat and ship shall never meet again!

But 'tis not mine to tell their tale of grief,
Their constant peril, and their scant relief;
Their days of danger, and their nights of pain;
Their manly courage even when deemed in vain;
The sapping famine, rendering scarce a son
Known to his mother in the skeleton;
The ills that lessened still their little store,
And starved even Hunger till he wrung no more;
The varying frowns and favours of the deep,
That now almost ingulfs, then leaves to creep
With crazy oar and shattered strength along
The tide that yields reluctant to the strong;
The incessant fever of that arid thirst
Which welcomes, as a well, the clouds that burst
Above their naked bones, and feels delight
In the cold drenching of the stormy night,
And from the outspread canvas gladly wrings

A drop to moisten life's all-grasping springs;
The savage foe escaped, to seek again
More hospitable shelter from the main;
The ghastly spectres which were doomed at last
To tell as true a tale of dangers past,
As ever the dark annals of the deep
Disclosed for man to dread or woman weep.

x

We leave them to their fate, but not unknown
Nor unredressed. Revenge may have her own:
Roused discipline aloud proclaims their cause,
And injured navies urge their broken laws.
Pursue we on his track the mutineer,
Whom distant vengeance had not taught to fear.
Wide o'er the wave—away! away! away!
Once more his eyes shall hail the welcome bay;
Once more the happy shores without a law
Receive the outlaws whom they lately saw;
Nature, and Nature's goddess—woman—woos
To lands where, save their conscience, none accuse;
Where all partake the earth without dispute,
And bread itself is gathered as a fruit;²
Where none contest the fields, the woods, the streams:—
The goldless age, where gold disturbs no dreams,
Inhabits or inhabited the shore,
Till Europe taught them better than before:
Bestowed her customs, and amended theirs,
But left her vices also to their heirs.
Away with this! behold them as they were,
Do good with Nature, or with Nature err.
“Huzza! for Otaheite!” was the cry,
As stately swept the gallant vessel by.
The breeze springs up; the lately flapping sail
Extends its arch before the growing gale:
In swifter ripples stream aside the seas,
Which her bold bow flings off with dashing ease.
Thus Argo³ ploughed the Euxine's virgin foam,
But those she wafted still looked back to home:
These spurn their country with their rebel bark,
And fly her as the raven fled the ark;
And yet they seek to nestle with the dove,
And tame their fiery spirits down to love.

CANTO THE SECOND

I

How pleasant were the songs of Toobonai,⁴
When summer's sun went down the coral bay !
Come, let us to the islet's softest shade,
And hear the warbling birds ! the damsel said :
The wood-dove from the forest-depth shall coo,
Like voices of the gods from Bolotoo :
We'll cull the flowers that grow above the dead,
For these most bloom where rests the warrior's head ;
And we will sit in twilight's face, and see
The sweet moon glancing through the tooa tree,
The lofty accents of whose sighing bough
Shall sadly please us as we lean below ;
Or climb the steep, and view the surf in vain
Wrestle with rocky giants o'er the main,
Which spurn in columns back the baffled spray.
How beautiful are these ! how happy they,
Who, from the toil and tumult of their lives,
Steal to look down where naught but ocean strives !
Even he too loves at times the blue lagoon,
And smooths his ruffled mane beneath the moon.

II

Yes—from the sepulchre we'll gather flowers,
Then feast like spirits in their promised bowers,
Then plunge and revel in the rolling surf,
Then lay our limbs along the tender turf,
And, wet and shining from the sportive toil,
Anoint our bodies with the fragrant oil,
And plait our garlands gathered from the grave,
And wear the wreaths that sprung from out the brave.
But lo ! night comes, the Mooa woos us back,
The sound of mats are heard along our track ;
Anon the torchlight dance shall fling its sheen
In flashing mazes o'er the Marly's green ;
And we too will be there ; we too recall
The memory bright with many a festival,
Ere Fiji blew the shell of war, when foes
For the first time were wafted in canoes.
Alas ! for them the flower of mankind bleeds :
Alas ! for them our fields are rank with weeds :
Forgotten is the rapture, or unknown,
Of wandering with the moon and love alone.
But be it so :—they taught us how to wield

The club, and rain our arrows o'er the field :
Now let them reap the harvest of their art !
But feast to-night ! to-morrow we depart.
Strike up the dance ! the cava bowl fill high !
Drain every drop !—to-morrow we may die.
In summer garments be our limbs arrayed,
Around our waists the tappa's white displayed ;
Thick wreaths shall form our coronal, like spring's,
And round our necks shall glance the hooni strings ;
So shall their brighter hues contrast the glow
Of the dusk bosoms that beat high below.

III

But now the dance is o'er—yet stay awhile ;
Ah, pause ! nor yet put out the social smile.
To-morrow for the Mooa we depart,
But not to-night—to-night is for the heart.
Again bestow the wreaths we gently woo,
Ye young enchantresses of gay Licoo !
How lovely are your forms ! how every sense
Bows to your beauties, softened, but intense,
Like to the flowers on Mataloco's steep,
Which fling their fragrance far athwart the deep !—
We too will see Licoo ; but—oh ! my heart !—
What do I say ?—to-morrow we depart !

IV

Thus rose a song—the harmony of times
Before the winds blew Europe o'er these climes.
True, they had vices—such are Nature's growth—
But only the barbarian's—we have both ;
The sordor of civilization, mixed
With all the savage which man's fall hath fixed.
Who hath not seen Dissimulation's reign,
The prayers of Abel linked to deeds of Cain ?
Who such would see may from his lattice view
The Old World more degraded than the New—
Now new no more, save where Columbia rears
Twin giants, born by Freedom to her spheres,
Where Chimborazo, over air, earth, wave,
Glares with his Titan eye, and sees no slave.

V

Such was the ditty of Tradition's days,
Which to the dead a lingering fame conveys
In song, where fame as yet hath left no sign
Beyond the sound whose charm is half divine,

Which leaves no record to the sceptic eye,
But yields young history all to harmony ;
A boy Achilles, with the centaur's lyre
In hand, to teach him to surpass his sire.
For one long-cherished ballad's simple stave,
Rung from the rock, or mingled with the wave,
Or from the bubbling streamlet's grassy side,
Or gathering mountain echoes as they glide,
Hath greater power o'er each true heart and ear,
Than all the columns Conquest's minions rear ;
Invites, when hieroglyphics are a theme
For sages' labours, or the student's dream ;
Attracts, when History's volumes are a toil—
The first, the freshest bud of Feeling's soil.
Such was this rude rhyme—rhyme is of the rude—
But such inspired the Norseman's solitude,
Who came and conquered ; such, wherever rise
Lands which no foes destroy or civilize,
Exist : and what can our accomplished art
Of verse do more than reach the awakened heart ?

VI

And sweetly now those untaught melodies
Broke the luxurious silence of the skies,
The sweet siesta of a summer day,
The tropic afternoon of Toobonai,
When every flower was bloom, and air was balm,
And the first breath began to stir the palm,
The first yet voiceless wind to urge the wave
All gently to refresh the thirsty cave,
Where sat the songstress with the stranger boy,
Who taught her passion's desolating joy,
Too powerful over every heart, but most
O'er those who know not how it may be lost ;
O'er those who, burning in the new-born fire,
Like martyrs revel in their funeral pyre,
With such devotion to their ecstasy,
That life knows no such rapture as to die :
And die they do ; for earthly life has naught
Matched with that burst of nature, even in thought ;
And all our dreams of better life above
But close in one eternal gush of love.

VII

There sat the gentle savage of the wild,
In growth a woman, though in years a child,
As childhood dates within our colder clime,

Where naught is ripened rapidly save crime ;
The infant of an infant world, as pure
From nature—lovely, warm, and premature ;
Dusky like night, but night with all her stars,
Or cavern sparkling with its native spars ;
With eyes that were a language and a spell,
A form like Aphrodite's in her shell,
With all her loves around her on the deep,
Voluptuous as the first approach of sleep ;
Yet full of life—for through her tropic cheek
The blush would make its way, and all but speak :
The sun-born blood suffused her neck, and threw
O'er her clear nut-brown skin a lucid hue,
Like coral reddening through the darkened wave,
Which draws the diver to the crimson cave.
Such was this daughter of the southern seas,
Herself a billow in her energies,
To bear the bark of others' happiness,
Nor feel a sorrow till their joy grew less :
Her wild and warm yet faithful bosom knew
No joy like what it gave ; her hopes ne'er drew
Aught from experience, that chill touchstone, whose
Sad proof reduces all things from their hues ;
She feared no ill, because she knew it not,
Or what she knew was soon—too soon—forgot :
Her smiles and tears had passed, as light winds pass
O'er lakes to ruffle, not destroy, their glass,
Whose depths unsearched, and fountains from the hill,
Restore their surface, in itself so still,
Until the earthquake tear the naiad's cave,
Root up the spring, and trample on the wave,
And crush the living waters to a mass,
The amphibious desert of the dank morass !
And must their fate be hers ? The eternal change
But grasps humanity with quicker range ;
And they who fall but fall as worlds will fall,
To rise, if just, a spirit o'er them all.

VIII

And who is he ? the blue-eyed northern child ⁶
Of isles more known to man, but scarce less wild ;
The fair-haired offspring of the Hebrides,
Where roars the Pentland with its whirling seas ;
Rocked in his cradle by the roaring wind,
The tempest-born in body and in mind,
His young eyes opening on the ocean-foam,
Had from that moment deemed the deep his home,

The giant comrade of his pensive moods,
 The sharer of his craggy solitudes,
 The only Mentor of his youth, where'er
 His bark was borne; the sport of wave and air:
 A careless thing, who placed his choice in chance,
 Nursed by the legends of his land's romance;
 Eager to hope, but not less firm to bear,
 Acquainted with all feelings save despair.
 Placed in the Arab's clime, he would have been
 As bold a rover as the sands have seen,
 And braved their thirst with as enduring lip
 As Ishmael, wafted on his desert-ship;⁶
 Fixed upon Chili's shore, a proud cacique;
 On Hellas' mountains, a rebellious Greek;
 Born in a tent, perhaps a Tamerlane;
 Bred to a throne, perhaps unfit to reign.
 For the same soul that rends its path to sway,
 If reared to such, can find no further prey
 Beyond itself, and must retrace its way,⁷
 Plunging for pleasure into pain: the same
 Spirit which made a Nero Rome's worst shame,
 A humbler state and discipline of heart,
 Had formed his glorious namesake's counterpart,⁸
 But grant his vices, grant them all his own,
 How small their theatre without a throne!

IX

Thou smilest:—these comparisons seem high
 To those who scan all things with dazzled eye;
 Linked with the unknown name of one whose doom
 Has naught to do with glory or with Rome,
 With Chili, Hellas, or with Araby;—
 Thou smilest?—Smile; 'tis better thus than sigh;
 Yet such he might have been; he was a man,
 A soaring spirit, ever in the van,
 A patriot hero or despotic chief,
 To form a nation's glory or its grief,
 Born under auspices which make us more
 Or less than we delight to ponder o'er.
 But these are visions; say, what was he here?
 A blooming boy, a truant mutineer.
 The fair-haired Torquil, free as ocean's spray,
 The husband of the bride of Toobonai.

X

By Neuha's side he sate, and watched the waters—
 Neuha, the sunflower of the island daughters,

Highborn (a birth at which the herald smiles,
Without a scutcheon for these secret isles),
Of a long race, the valiant and the free,
The naked knights of savage chivalry,
Whose grassy cairns ascend along the shore
And thine—I've seen—Achilles! do no more.
She, when the thunder-bearing strangers came,
In vast canoes, begirt with bolts of flame,
Topped with tall trees, which, loftier than the palm,
Seemed rooted in the deep amidst its calm:
But when the winds awakened, shot forth wings
Broad as the cloud along the horizon flings,
And swayed the waves like cities of the sea,
Making the very billows look less free;—
She, with her paddling oar and dancing prow,
Shot through the surf, like reindeer through the snow;
Swift-gliding o'er the breaker's whitening edge,
Light as a nereid in her ocean sledge,
And gazed and wondered at the giant hulk,
Which heaved from wave to wave its trampling bulk.
The anchor dropped; it lay along the deep,
Like a huge lion in the sun asleep,
While round it swarmed the proas' flitting chain,
Like summer bees that hum around his mane.

XI

The white man landed!—need the rest be told?
The New World stretched its dusk hand to the Old;
Each was to each a marvel, and the tie
Of wonder warmed to better sympathy.
Kind was the welcome of the sun-born sires,
And kinder still their daughter's gentler fires.
Their union grew; the children of the storm
Found beauty linked with many a dusky form;
While these in turn admired the paler glow,
Which seemed so white in climes that knew no snow.
The chase, the race, the liberty to roam,
The soil where every cottage showed a home;
The sea-spread net, the lightly launched canoe,
Which stemmed the studded archipelago,
O'er whose blue bosom rose the starry isles;
The healthy slumber, earned by sportive toils;
The palm, the loftiest dryad of the woods,
Within whose bosom infant Bacchus broods,
While eagles scarce build higher than the crest
Which shadows o'er the vineyard in her breast;
The cava feast, the yam, the cocoa's root,

Which bears at once the cup, and milk, and fruit ;
The bread-tree, which, without the ploughshare, yields
The unreaped harvest of unfurrowed fields,
And bakes its unadulterated loaves
Without a furnace in unpurchased groves,
And flings off famine from its fertile breast,
A priceless market for the gathering guest ;—
These, with the luxuries of seas and woods,
The airy joys of social solitudes,
Tamed each rude wanderer to the sympathies
Of those who were more happy, if less wise,
Did more than Europe's discipline had done,
And civilized Civilization's son.

XII

Of these, and there was many a willing pair,
Neuha and Torquil were not the least fair ;
Both children of the isles, though distant far ;
Both born beneath a sea-presiding star ;
Both nourished amidst nature's native scenes,
Loved to the last, whatever intervenes
Between us and our childhood's sympathy,
Which still reverts to what first caught the eye.
He who first met the Highland's swelling blue
Will love each peak that shows a kindred hue,
Hail in each crag a friend's familiar face,
And clasp the mountain in his mind's embrace.
Long have I roamed through lands which are not mine,
Adored the Alp and loved the Apennine,
Revered Parnassus, and beheld the steep
Jove's Ida and Olympus crown the deep :
But 'twas not all long ages' lore, nor all
Their nature held me in their thrilling thrall ;
The infant rapture still survived the boy,
And Loch-na-gar with Ida looked o'er Troy,⁹
Mixed Celtic memories with the Phrygian mount,
And Highland linns with Castalie's clear fount.
Forgive me, Homer's universal shade !
Forgive me, Phœbus ! that my fancy strayed ;
'The north and nature taught me to adore
Your scenes sublime, from those beloved before.

XIII

The love which maketh all things fond and fair,
The youth which makes one rainbow of the air,
The dangers past, that make even man enjoy
The pause in which he ceases to destroy,

The mutual beauty, which the sternest feel
Strike to their hearts like lightning to the steel,
United the half savage and the whole,
The maid and boy in one absorbing soul.
No more the thundering memory of the fight
Wrapped his weaned bosom in its dark delight ;
No more the irksome restlessness of rest
Disturbed him like the eagle in her nest,
Whose wetted beak and far-pervading eye
Darts for a victim over all the sky :
His heart was tamed to that voluptuous state,
At once Elysian and effeminate,
Which leaves no laurels o'er the hero's urn ;—
These wither when for aught save blood they burn ;
Yet when their ashes in their nook are laid,
Doth not the myrtle leave as sweet a shade ?
Had Cæsar known but Cleopatra's kiss,
Rome had been free, the world had not been his.
And what have Cæsar's deeds and Cæsar's fame
Done for the earth ? We feel them in our shame ;
The gory sanction of his glory stains
The rust which tyrants cherish on our chains.
Though Glory, Nature, Reason, Freedom, bid
Roused millions do what single Brutus did—
Sweep these mere mock-birds of the despot's song
From the tall bough where they have perched so long—
Still are we hawked at by such mousing owls,
And take for falcons those ignoble fowls,
When but a word of freedom would dispel
These bugbears, as their terrors show too well.

XIV

Rapt in the fond forgetfulness of life,
Neuha, the South Sea girl, was all a wife,
With no distracting world to call her off
From love ; with no society to scoff
At the new transient flame ; no babbling crowd
Of coxcombs in admiration loud,
Or with adulterous whisper to alloy
Her duty, and her glory, and her joy ;
With faith and feelings naked as her form,
She stood and stands a rainbow in a storm,
Changing its hues with bright variety,
But still expanding lovelier o'er the sky,
Howe'er its arch may swell, its colours move,
The cloud-compelling harbinger of love.

xv

Here, in this grotto of the wave-worn shore,
They passed the tropics' red meridian o'er;
Nor long the hours—they never paused o'er time,
Unbroken by the clock's funereal chime,
Which deals the daily pittance of our span,
And points and mocks with iron laugh at man.
What deemed they of the future or the past?
The present, like a tyrant, held them fast:
Their hour-glass was the sea-sand, and the tide,
Like her smooth billow, saw their moments glide;
Their clock the sun, in his unbounded tower;
They reckoned not, whose day was but an hour;
The nightingale, their only vesper-bell,
Sung sweetly to the rose the day's farewell;¹⁰
The broad sun set, but not with lingering sweep,
As in the north he mellows o'er the deep;
But fiery, full, and fierce, as if he left
The world forever, earth of light bereft,
Plunged with red forehead down along the wave,
As dives a hero headlong to his grave.
Then rose they, looking first along the skies,
And then for light into each other's eyes,
Wondering that summer showed so brief a sun,
And asking if indeed the day were done.

xvi

And let not this seem strange: the devotee
Lives not in earth, but in his ecstasy;
Around him days and worlds are headless driven,
His soul is gone before his dust to heaven.
Is love less potent? No—his path is trod,
Alike uplifted gloriously to God;
Or linked to all we know of heaven below,
The other better self, whose joy or woe
Is more than ours; the all-absorbing flame
Which, kindled by another, grows the same,
Wrapped in one blaze; the pure, yet funeral pile,
Where gentle hearts, like Brahmins, sit and smile.
How often we forget all time, when lone,
Admiring Nature's universal throne,
Her woods, her wilds, her waters, the intense
Reply of hers to our intelligence!
Live not the stars and mountains? Are the waves
Without a spirit? Are the dropping caves
Without a feeling in their silent tears?
No, no;—they woo and clasp us to their spheres,

Dissolve this clog and clod of clay before
Its hour, and merge our soul in the great shore.
Strip off this fond and false identity!—
Who thinks of self when gazing on the sky?
And who, though gazing lower, ever thought,
In the young moments ere the heart is taught
Time's lesson, of man's baseness or his own?
All nature is his realm, and love his throne.

XVII

Neuha arose, and Torquil: twilight's hour
Came sad and softly to their rocky bower,
Which, kindling by degrees its dewy spars,
Echoed their dim light to the mustering stars.
Slowly the pair, partaking nature's calm,
Sought out their cottage, built beneath the palm;
Now smiling and now silent, as the scene;
Lovely as Love—the spirit!—when serene.
The ocean scarce spoke louder with his swell,
Than breathes his mimic murmurer in the shell,¹¹
As, far divided from his parent deep,
The sea-born infant cries, and will not sleep,
Raising its little plaint in vain, to rave
For the broad bosom of his nursing wave:
The woods drooped darkly, as inclined to rest,
The tropic bird wheeled rockward to his nest,
And the blue sky spread round them like a lake
Of peace, where Piety her thirst might slake.

XVIII

But through the palm and plantain, hark, a voice!
Not such as would have been a lover's choice,
In such an hour, to break the air so still;
No dying night-breeze, harping o'er the hill,
Striking the strings of nature, rock and tree.
Those best and earliest lyres of harmony,
With Echo for their chorus; nor the alarm
Of the loud war-whoop to dispel the charm;
Nor the soliloquy of the hermit owl,
Exhaling all his solitary soul,
The dim, though large-eyed winged anchorite,
Who peals his dreary pæan o'er the night;—
But a loud, long, and naval whistle, shrill
As ever started through a sea-birds' bill;
And then a pause, and then a hoarse "Hillo!
Torquil, my boy! what cheer? Ho! brother, ho!"
"Who hails?" cried Torquil, following with his eye
The sound. "Here's one," was all the brief reply.

XIX

But here the herald of the selfsame mouth
 Came breathing o'er the aromatic south,
 Not like a "bed of violets" on the gale,
 But such as wafts its cloud o'er grog or ale,
 Borne from a short frail pipe, which yet had blown
 Its gentle odours over either zone,
 And, puffed where'er winds rise or waters roll,
 Had wafted smoke from Portsmouth to the Pole,
 Opposed its vapour as the lightning flashed,
 And reeked, 'midst mountain billows, unabashed,
 To Æolus a constant sacrifice,
 Through every change of all the varying skies.
 And what was he who bore it?—I may err,
 But deem him sailor or philosopher.¹²
 Sublime tobacco! which from east to west
 Cheers the tar's labour or the Turkman's rest;
 Which on the Moslem's ottoman divides
 His hours, and rivals opium and his brides:
 Magnificent in Stamboul, but less grand,
 Though not less loved, in Wapping or the Strand;
 Divine in hookas, glorious in a pipe,
 When tipped with amber, mellow, rich, and ripe;
 Like other charmers, wooing the caress,
 More dazingly when daring in full dress,
 Yet thy true lovers more admire by far
 Thy naked beauties— Give me a cigar!

XX

Through the approaching darkness of the wood
 A human figure broke the solitude,
 Fantastically, it may be, arrayed,
 A seaman in a savage masquerade;
 Such as appears to rise out from the deep
 When o'er the line the merry vessels sweep,
 And the rough saturnalia of the tar
 Flock o'er the deck in Neptune's borrowed car,¹³
 And, pleased, the god of ocean sees his name
 Revive once more, though but in mimic game
 Of his true sons, who riot in the breeze
 Undreamt of in his native Cyclades.
 Still the old god delights, from out the main,
 To snatch some glimpses of his ancient reign.
 Our sailor's jacket, though in ragged trim,
 His constant pipe, which never yet burned dim,
 His foremast air, and somewhat rolling gait,
 Like his dear vessel, spoke his former state;

But then a sort of kerchief round his head,
 Not over tightly bound, or nicely spread ;
 And 'stead of trousers (ah ! too early torn !
 For even the mildest woods will have their thorn)
 A curious sort of somewhat scanty mat
 Now served for inexpressibles and hat ;
 His naked feet and neck, and sunburnt face,
 Perchance might suit alike with either race.
 His arms were all his own, our Europe's growth,
 Which two worlds bless for civilizing both ;
 The musket swung behind his shoulders broad,
 And somewhat stooped by his marine abode,
 But brawny as the boar's ; and hung beneath,
 His cutlass drooped, unconscious of a sheath,
 Or lost or worn away ; his pistols were
 Linked to his belt, a matrimonial pair—
 (Let not this metaphor appear a scoff,
 Though one missed fire, the other would go off) ;
 These, with a bayonet, not so free from rust
 As when the arm-chest held its brighter trust,
 Completed his accoutrements, as Night
 Surveyed him in his garb heteroclite.

XXI

"What cheer, Ben Bunting?" cried (when in full view
 Our new acquaintance) Torquil. "Aught of new?"
 "Ey, ey!" quoth Ben, "not new, but news enow;
 A strange sail in the offing."—"Sail! and how?
 What! could you make her out? It can not be;
 I've seen no rag of canvas on the sea."
 "Belike," said Ben, "you might not from the bay,
 But from the bluff-head, where I watched to-day,
 I saw her in the doldrums; for the wind
 Was light and baffling."—"When the sun declined
 Where lay she? had she anchored?"—"No, but still
 She bore down on us, till the wind grew still."
 "Her flag?"—"I had no glass: but fore and aft,
 Egad! she seemed a wicked-looking craft."
 "Armed?"—"I expect so; sent on the lookout:
 'Tis time, belike, to put our helm about."
 "About?—Whate'er may have us now in chase,
 We'll make no running fight, for that were base;
 We will die at our quarters, like true men."
 "Ey, ey! for that 'tis all the same to Ben."
 "Does Christian know this?"—"Ay; he has piped all hands
 To quarters. They are furbishing the stands
 Of arms; and we have got some guns to bear,

And scaled them. You are wanted."—"That's but fair;
And if it were not, mine is not the soul
To leave my comrades helpless on the shoal.
My Neuha! ha! and must my fate pursue
Not me alone, but one so sweet and true?
But whatsoe'er betide, ah, Neuha! now
Unman me not; the hour will not allow
A tear; I'm thine whatever intervenes!"
"Right," quoth Ben; "that will do for the marines."¹⁴

CANTO THE THIRD

THE fight was o'er; the flashing through the gloom,
Which robes the cannon as he wings a tomb,
Had ceased; and sulphury vapours upward driven
Had left the earth, and but polluted heaven:
The rattling roar which rung in every volley
Had left the echoes to their melancholy;
No more they shrieked their horror, boom for boom;
The strife was done, the vanquished had their doom;
The mutineers were crushed, dispersed, or ta'en,
Or lived to deem the happiest were the slain.
Few, few escaped, and these were hunted o'er
The isle they loved beyond their native shore.
No further home was theirs, it seemed, on earth,
Once renegades to that which gave them birth;
Tracked like wild beasts, like them they sought the wild,
As to a mother's bosom flies the child;
But vainly wolves and lions seek their den,
And still more vainly men escape from men.

II

Beneath a rock whose jutting base protrudes
Far over ocean in its fiercest moods,
When scaling his enormous crag the wave
Is hurled down headlong like the foremost brave,
And falls back on the foaming crowd behind,
Which fight beneath the banners of the wind,
But now at rest, a little remnant drew
Together, bleeding, thirsty, faint, and few;
But still their weapons in their hands, and still
With something of the pride of former will,

As men not all unused to meditate,
And strive much more than wonder at their fate.
Their present lot was what they had foreseen,
And dared as what was likely to have been;
Yet still the lingering hope, which deemed their lot
Not pardoned, but unsought for or forgot,
Or trusted that, if sought, their distant caves
Might still be missed amidst the world of waves,
Had weaned their thoughts in part from what they saw
And felt, the vengeance of their country's law.
Their sea-green isle, their guilt-won paradise,
No more could shield their virtue or their vice:
Their better feelings, if such were, were thrown
Back on themselves—their sins remained alone.
Proscribed even in their second country, they
Were lost; in vain the world before them lay;
All outlets seemed secured. Their new allies
Had fought and bled in mutual sacrifice;
But what availed the club and spear, and arm
Of Hercules, against the sulphury charm,
The magic of the thunder, which destroyed
The warrior ere his strength could be employed?
Dug, like a spreading pestilence, the grave
No less of human bravery than the brave!¹⁵
Their own scant numbers acted all the few
Against the many oft will dare and do;
But though the choice seems native to die free,
Even Greece can boast but one Thermopylæ,
Till now, when she has forged her broken chain
Back to a sword, and dies and lives again!

III

Beside the jutting rock the few appeared,
Like the last remnant of the red-deer's herd;
Their eyes were feverish, and their aspect worn,
But still the hunter's blood was on their horn.
A little stream came tumbling from the height,
And straggling into ocean as it might,
Its bounding crystal frolicked in the ray,
And gushed from cliff to crag with saltless spray;
Close on the wild, wide ocean, yet as pure
And fresh as innocence, and more secure,
Its silver torrent glittered o'er the deep,
As the shy chamois' eye o'erlooks the steep,
While far below the vast and sullen swell
Of ocean's Alpine azure rose and fell.
To this young spring they rushed—all feelings first

Absorbed in passion's and in nature's thirst—
Drank as they do who drink their last, and threw
Their arms aside to revel in its dew ;
Cooled their scorched throats, and washed the gory stains
From wounds whose only bandage might be chains ;
Then, when their drought was quenched, looked sadly round,
As wondering how so many still were found
Alive and fetterless :—but silent all,
Each sought his fellow's eyes, as if to call
On him for language which his lips denied,
As though their voices with their cause had died.

IV

Stern, and aloof a little from the rest,
Stood Christian, with his arms across his chest.
The ruddy, reckless, dauntless hue once spread
Along his cheek was livid now as lead ;
His light brown locks, so graceful in their flow,
Now rose like startled vipers o'er his brow.
Still as a statue, with his lips compressed
To stifle even the breath within his breast,
Fast by the rock, all menacing but mute,
He stood ; and, save a slight beat of his foot,
Which deepened now and then the sandy dint
Beneath his heel, his form seemed turned to flint.
Some paces farther Torquil leaned his head
Against a bank, and spoke not, but he bled—
Not mortally :—his worst wound was within ;
His brow was pale, his blue eyes sunken in,
And blood-drops, sprinkled o'er his yellow hair,
Showed that his faintness came not from despair,
But nature's ebb. Beside him was another,
Rough as a bear, but willing as a brother—
Ben Bunting, who essayed to wash and wipe,
And bind his wound—then calmly lit his pipe,
A trophy which survived a hundred fights,
A beacon which had cheered ten thousand nights.
The fourth and last of this deserted group
Walked up and down—at times would stand, then stoop
To pick a pebble up—then let it drop—
Then hurry as in haste—then quickly stop—
Then cast his eyes on his companions—then
Half whistle half a tune, and pause again—
And then his former movements would redouble,
With something between carelessness and trouble.
This is a long description, but applies
To scarce five minutes past before the eyes ;

But yet what minutes! Moments like to these
Rend men's lives into immortalities.

v

At length Jack Skyscape, a mercurial man,
Who fluttered over all things like a fan,
More brave than firm, and more disposed to dare
And die at once than wrestle with despair,
Exclaimed "G—d damn!"—those syllables intense—
Nucleus of England's native eloquence,
As the Turk's "Allah!" or the Roman's more
Pagan "Proh Jupiter!" was wont of yore
To give their first impressions such a vent
By way of echo to embarrassment.
Jack was embarrassed—never hero more,
And as he knew not what to say, he swore:
Nor swore in vain; the long congenial sound
Revived Ben Bunting from his pipe profound;
He drew it from his mouth, and looked full wise,
But merely added to the oath his eyes;
Thus rendering the imperfect phrase complete,
A peroration I need not repeat.

vi

But Christian, of a higher order, stood
Like an extinct volcano in his mood;
Silent, and sad, and savage—with the trace
Of passion reeking from his clouded face;
Till lifting up again his sombre eye,
It glanced on Torquil, who leaned faintly by.
"And is it thus?" he cried, "unhappy boy!
And thee, too, thee—my madness must destroy!"
He said, and strode to where young Torquil stood,
Yet dabbled with his lately flowing blood;
Seized his hand wistfully, but did not press,
And shrunk as fearful of his own caress;
Inquired into his state; and when he heard
The wound was slighter than he deemed or feared,
A moment's brightness passed along his brow,
As much as such a moment would allow.
"Yes," he exclaimed, "we're taken in the toil,
But not a coward or a common spoil;
Dearly they've bought us—dearly still may buy—
And I must fall; but have you strength to fly?
'Twould be some comfort still could you survive;
Our dwindled band is now too few to strive.
Oh! for a sole canoe! though but a shell,

To bear you hence to where a hope may dwell !
 For me, my lot is what I sought ; to be,
 In life or death, the fearless and the free."

VII

Even as he spoke, around the promontory,
 Which nodded o'er the billows high and hoary,
 A dark speck dotted ocean : on it flew
 Like to the shadow of a roused sea-mew ;
 Onward it came—and, lo ! a second followed—
 Now seen—now hid—where ocean's vale was hollowed ;
 And near, and nearer, till their dusky crew
 Presented well-known aspects to the view,
 Till on the surf their skimming paddles play,
 Buoyant as wings, and flitting through the spray ;—
 Now perching on the wave's high curl, and now
 Dashed downward in the thundering foam below,
 Which flings it broad and boiling sheet on sheet,
 And slings its high flakes, shivered into sleet ;
 But floating still through surf and swell, drew nigh
 The barks, like small birds through a lowering sky.
 Their art seemed nature—such the skill to sweep
 The wave of these born playmates of the deep.

VIII

And who the first that, springing on the strand,
 Leaped like a nereid from her shell to land,
 With dark but brilliant skin, and dewy eye
 Shining with love, and hope, and constancy ?
 Neuha—the fond, the faithful, the adored—
 Her heart on Torquil's like a torrent poured :
 And smiled, and wept, and near, and nearer clasped,
 As if to be assured 'twas him she grasped ;
 Shuddered to see his yet warm wound, and then,
 To find it trivial, smiled and wept again.
 She was a warrior's daughter, and could bear
 Such sights, and feel, and mourn, but not despair.
 Her lover lived—nor foes nor fears could blight
 That full-blown moment in its all delight :
 Joy trickled in her tears, joy filled the sob
 That rocked her heart till almost heard to throb ;
 And paradise was breathing in the sigh
 Of nature's child in nature's ecstasy.

IX

The sterner spirits who beheld that meeting
 Were not unmoved ; who are, when hearts are greeting ?

Even Christian gazed upon the maid and boy
With tearless eye, but yet a gloomy joy
Mixed with those bitter thoughts the soul arrays
In hopeless visions of our better days,
When all's gone—to the rainbow's latest ray.
“And but for me!” he said, and turned away;
Then gazed upon the pair, as in his den
A lion looks upon his cubs again;
And then relapsed into his sullen guise,
As heedless of his further destinies.

X

But brief their time for good or evil thought;
The billows round the promontory brought
The plash of hostile oars.—Alas! who made
That sound a dread? All around them seemed arrayed
Against them, save the bride of Toobonai:
She, as she caught the first glimpse o'er the bay
Of the armed boats, which hurried to complete
The remnant's ruin with their flying feet,
Beckoned the natives round her to their prows,
Embarked their guests and launched their light canoes;
In one placed Christian and his comrades twain;
But she and Torquil must not part again.
She fixed him in her own.—Away! away!
They clear the breakers, dart along the bay,
And toward a group of islets, such as bear
The sea-bird's nest and seal's surf-hollowed lair,
They skim the blue tops of the billows; fast
They flew, and fast their fierce pursuers chased.
They gain upon them—now they lose again—
Again make way and menace o'er the main;
And now the two canoes in chase divide,
And follow different courses o'er the tide,
To baffle the pursuit.—Away! away!
A life is on each paddle's flight to-day,
And more than life or lives to Neuha: Love
Freights the frail bark and urges to the cove;
And now the refuge and the foe are nigh—
Yet, yet a moment: Fly, thou light ark, fly!

CANTO THE FOURTH

I

WHITE as a white sail on a dusky sea,
When half the horizon's clouded and half free,
Fluttering between the dun wave and the sky,
Is hope's last gleam in man's extremity.
Her anchor parts! but still her snowy sail
Attracts our eye amidst the rudest gale:
Though every wave she climbs divides us more,
The heart still follows from the loneliest shore.

II

Not distant from the isle of Toobonai,
A black rock rears its bosom o'er the spray;
The haunt of birds, a desert to mankind.
Where the rough seal reposes from the wind,
And sleeps unwieldy in his cavern dun,
Or gambols with huge frolic in the sun:
There shrilly to the passing oar is heard
The startled echo of the ocean bird,
Who rears on its bare breast her callow brood,
The feathered fishers of the solitude.
A narrow segment of the yellow sand
On one side forms the outline of a strand;
Here the young turtle, crawling from his shell,
Steals to the deep wherein his parents dwell;
Chipped by the beam, a nursling of the day,
But hatched for ocean by the fostering ray;
The rest was one bleak precipice, as e'er
Gave mariners a shelter and despair;
A spot to make the saved regret the deck
Which late went down, and envy the lost wreck.
Such was the stern asylum Neuha chose
To shield her lover from his following foes;
But all its secret was not told: she knew
In this a treasure hidden from the view.

III

Ere the canoes divided, near the spot,
The men that manned what held her Torquil's lot,
By her command removed, to strengthen more
The skiff which wafted Christian from the shore.
This he would have opposed; but with a smile
She pointed calmly to the craggy isle,
And bade him "speed and prosper." She would take

The rest upon herself for Torquil's sake.
They parted with this added aid ; afar
The proa darted like a shooting star,
And gained on the pursuers, who now steered
Right on the rock which she and Torquil neared.
They pulled ; her arm, though delicate, was free
And firm as ever grappled with the sea,
And yielded scarce to Torquil's manlier strength.
The prow now almost lay within its length
Of the crag's steep, inexorable face,
With naught but soundless waters for its base ;
Within a hundred boats' length was the foe,
And now what refuge but their frail canoe ?
This Torquil asked with half-upbraiding eye,
Which said, " Has Neuha brought me here to die ?
Is this a place of safety, or a grave,
And yon huge rock the tombstone of the wave ?"

IV

They rested on their paddles, and uprose
Neuha, and pointing to the approaching foes,
Cried, " Torquil, follow me, and fearless follow !"
Then plunged at once into the ocean's hollow.
There was no time to pause—the foes were near—
Chains in his eye, and menace in his ear ;
With vigour they pulled on, and as they came,
Hailed him to yield, and by his forfeit name.
Headlong he leaped—to him the swimmer's skill
Was native, and now all his hope from ill :
But how, or where ? He dived, and rose no more ;
The boat's crew looked amazed o'er sea and shore.
There was no landing on that precipice,
Steep, harsh, and slippery as a berg of ice.
They watched awhile to see him float again,
But not a trace rebubbled from the main :
The wave rolled on, no ripple on its face,
Since their first plunge recalled a single trace ;
The little whirl which eddied, and slight foam,
That whitened o'er what seemed their latest home,
White as a sepulchre above the pair
Who left no marble (mournful as an heir) ;
The quiet proa wavering o'er the tide
Was all that told of Torquil and his bride ;
And but for this alone the whole might seem
The vanished phantom of a seaman's dream.
They paused and searched in vain, then pulled away ;
Even superstition now forbade their stay.

Some said he had not plunged into the wave,
But vanished like a corpse-light from a grave;
Others, that something supernatural
Glared in his figure, more than mortal tall;
While all agreed that in his cheek and eye
There was a dead hue of eternity.
Still as their oars receded from the crag,
Round every weed a moment would they lag,
Expectant of some token of their prey;
But no—he had melted from them like the spray.

V

And where was he, the pilgrim of the deep,
Following the nereid? Had they ceased to weep
Forever? or, received in coral caves,
Wrung life and pity from the softening waves?
Did they with ocean's hidden sovereigns dwell,
And sound with mermen the fantastic shell?
Did Neuha with the mermaids comb her hair
Flowing o'er ocean as it streamed in air?
Or had they perished, and in silence slept
Beneath the gulf wherein they boldly leapt?

VI

Young Neuha plunged into the deep, and he
Followed: her track beneath her native sea
Was as a native's of the element,
So smoothly, bravely, brilliantly she went,
Leaving a streak of light behind her heel,
Which struck and flashed like an amphibious steel.
Closely, and scarcely less expert to trace
The depths where divers hold the pearl in chase,
Torquil, the nursling of the northern seas,
Pursued her liquid steps with heart and ease.
Deep—deeper for an instant Neuha led
The way—then upward soared—and as she spread
Her arms, and flung the foam from off her locks,
Laughed, and the sound was answered by the rocks.
They had gained a central realm of earth again,
But looked for tree, and field, and sky, in vain.
Around she pointed to a spacious cave,¹⁶
Whose only portal was the keyless wave,
(A hollow archway by the sun unseen,
Save through the billows' glassy veil of green,
In some transparent ocean holiday,
When all the finny people are at play),
Wiped with her hair the brine from Torquil's eyes,

And clapped her hands with joy at his surprise ;
Led him to where the rock appeared to jut,
And form a something like a Triton's hut ;
For all was darkness for a space, till day
Through clefts above let in a sobered ray ;
As in some old cathedral's glimmering aisle
The dusty monuments from light recoil,
Thus sadly in their refuge submarine
The vault drew half her shadow from the scene.

VII

Forth from her bosom the young savage drew
A pine torch, strongly girded with gnatoo ;
A plantain-leaf o'er all, the more to keep
Its latent sparkle from the sapping deep.
This mantle kept it dry ; then from a nook
Of the same plantain-leaf a flint she took,
A few shrunk withered twigs, and from the blade
Of Torquil's knife struck fire, and thus arrayed
The grot with torchlight. Wide it was and high,
And showed a self-born Gothic canopy ;
The arch upreared by nature's architect,
The architrave some earthquake might erect ;
The buttress from some mountain's bosom hurled
When the Poles crashed, and water was the world ;
Or hardened from some earth-absorbing fire,
While yet the globe reeked from its funeral pyre ;
The fretted pinnacle, the aisle, the nave ¹⁷
Were there, all scooped by Darkness from her cave.
There, with a little tinge of fantasy,
Fantastic faces moped and mowed on high,
And then a mitre or a shrine would fix
The eye upon its seeming crucifix.
Thus Nature played with the stalactites,
And built herself a chapel of the seas.

VIII

And Neuha took her Torquil by the hand,
And waved along the vault her kindled brand,
And led him into each recess, and showed
The secret places of their new abode.
Nor these alone, for all had been prepared
Before, to soothe the lover's lot she shared :
The mat for rest ; for dress the fresh gnatoo,
And sandal oil to fence against the dew ;
For food, the cocoanut, the yam, the bread
Born of the fruit ; for board the plantain spread

With its broad leaf, or turtle-shell which bore
A banquet in the flesh it covered o'er;
The gourd with water recent from the rill,
The ripe banana from the mellow hill;
A pine-torch pile to keep undying light,
And she herself, as beautiful as night,
To fling her shadowy spirit o'er the scene,
And make their subterranean world serene.
She had foreseen, since first the stranger's sail
Drew to their isle, that force or flight might fail,
And formed a refuge of the rocky den
For Torquil's safety from his countrymen,
Each dawn had wafted there her light canoe,
Laden with all the golden fruits that grew;
Each eve had seen her gliding through the hour
With all could cheer or deck their sparry bower;
And now she spread her little store with smiles,
The happiest daughter of the loving isles.

IX

She, as he gazed with grateful wonder, pressed
Her sheltered love to her impassioned breast;
And suited to her soft caresses, told
An olden tale of love—for love is old,
Old as eternity, but not outworn
With each new being born or to be born:¹⁸
How a young chief, a thousand moons ago,
Diving for turtle in the depths below,
Had risen, in tracking fast his ocean prey,
Into the cave which round and o'er them lay;
How in some desperate feud of after-time
He sheltered there a daughter of the clime,
A foe beloved, and offspring of a foe,
Saved by his tribe but for a captive's woe;
How, when the storm of war was stilled, he led
His island clan to where the waters spread
Their deep-green shadow o'er the rocky door,
Then dived—it seemed as if to rise no more:
His wondering mates, amazed within their bark,
Or deemed him mad, or prey to the blue shark;
Rowed round in sorrow the sea-girded rock,
Then paused upon their paddles from the shock;
When, fresh and springing from the deep, they saw
A goddess rise—so deemed they in their awe;
And their companion, glorious by her side,
Proud and exulting in his Mermaid bride:
And how, when undeceived, the pair they bore

With sounding conchs and joyous shouts to shore ;
How they had gladly lived and calmly died—
And why not also Torquil and his bride ?
Not mine to tell the rapturous caress
Which followed wildly in that wild recess
This tale ; enough that all within that cave
Was love, though buried, strong as in the grave
Where Abelard, through twenty years of death,
When Eloisa's form was lowered beneath
Their nuptial vault, his arms outstretched and pressed
The kindling ashes to his kindled breast,¹⁹
The waves without sang round their couch, their roar
As much unheeded as if life were o'er ;
Within, their hearts made all their harmony,
Love's broken murmur and more broken sigh.

X

And they, the cause and sharers of the shock
Which left them exiles of the hollow rock,
Where were they ? O'er the sea for life they plied,
To seek from Heaven the shelter men denied.
Another course had been their choice—but where ?
The wave which bore them still their foes would bear,
Who, disappointed of their former chase,
In search of Christian now renewed their race.
Eager with anger, their strong arms made way,
Like vultures baffled of their previous prey.
They gained upon them, all whose safety lay
In some deep crag or deeply-hidden bay :
No further chance or choice remained ; and right
For the first farther rock which met their sight
They steered, to take their latest view of land,
And yield as victims, or die sword in hand ;
Dismissed the natives and their shallop, who
Would still have battled for that scanty crew ;
But Christian bade them seek their shore again,
Nor add a sacrifice which were in vain ;
For what were simple bow and savage spear
Against the arms which must be wielded here ?

XI

They landed on a wild but narrow scene,
Where few but Nature's footsteps yet had been ;
Prepared their arms, and with that gloomy eye,
Stern and sustained, of man's extremity,
When hope is gone, nor glory's self remains
To cheer resistance against death or chains—

They stood, the three, as the three hundred stood
Who dyed Thermopylæ with holy blood.
But, ah! how different! 'tis the cause makes all,
Degrades or hallows courage in its fall.
O'er them no fame, eternal and intense,
Blazed through the clouds of death and beckoned hence;
No grateful country, smiling through her tears,
Begun the praises of a thousand years;
No nation's eyes would on their tomb be bent,
No heroes envy them their monument;
However boldly their warm blood was spilt,
Their life was shame, their epitaph was guilt.
And this they knew and felt, at least the one,
The leader of the band he had undone;
Who, born perchance for better things, had set
His life upon a cast which lingered yet:
But now the die was to be thrown, and all
The chances were in favour of his fall:
And such a fall! But still he faced the shock,
Obdurate as a portion of the rock
Whereon he stood, and fixed his levelled gun,
Dark as a sullen cloud before the sun.

XII

The boat drew nigh, well armed, and firm the crew
To act whatever duty bade them do;
Careless of danger, as the onward wind
Is of the leaves it strews, nor looks behind.
And yet perhaps they rather wished to go
Against a nation's than a native foe,
And felt that this poor victim of self-will,
Briton no more, had once been Britain's still.
They hailed him to surrender—no reply;
Their arms were poised, and glittered in the sky.
They hailed again—no answer; yet once more
They offered quarter louder than before.
The echoes only, from the rock's rebound,
Took their last farewell of the dying sound.
Then flashed the flint, and blazed the volleying flame,
And the smoke rose between them and their aim,
While the rock rattled with the bullets' knell,
Which pealed in vain, and flattened as they fell;
Then flew the only answer to be given
By those who had lost all hope in earth or heaven.
After the first fierce peal, as they pulled nigher,
They heard the voice of Christian shout, "Now, fire!"
And ere the word upon the echo died,

Two fell ; the rest assailed the rock's rough side,
And, furious at the madness of their foes,
Disdained all further efforts save to close.
But steep the crag, and all without a path,
Each step opposed a bastion to their wrath,
While, placed 'midst clefts the least accessible,
Which Christian's eye was trained to mark full well,
The three maintained a strife which must not yield,
In spots where eagles might have chosen to build.
Their every shot told : while the assailant fell,
Dashed on the shingles like the limpet shell ;
But still enough survived, and mounted still,
Scattering their numbers here and there, until
Surrounded and commanded, though not nigh
Enough for seizure, near enough to die,
The desperate trio held aloof their fate
But by a thread, like sharks who've gorged the bait ;
Yet to the very last they battled well,
And not a groan informed their foes who fell.
Christian died last—twice wounded ; and once more
Mercy was offered when they saw his gore ;
Too late for life, but not too late to die,
With, though a hostile hand, to close his eye.
A limb was broken, and he drooped along
The crag, as doth a falcon reft of young.
The sound revived him, or appeared to wake
Some passion which a weakly gesture spake :
He beckoned to the foremost, who drew nigh,
But, as they neared, he reared his weapon high—
His last ball had been aimed, but from his breast
He tore the topmost button from his vest,²⁰
Down the tube dashed it, levelled, fired, and smiled
As his foe fell ; then, like a serpent, coiled
His wounded, weary form, to where the steep
Looked desperate as himself along the deep ;
Cast one glance back, and clinched his hand and shook
His last rage 'gainst the earth which he forsook ;
Then plunged : the rock below received like glass
His body crushed into one gory mass,
With scarce a shred to tell of human form,
Or fragment for the sea-bird or the worm ;
A fair-haired scalp, besmeared with blood and weeds,
Yet reeked, the remnant of himself and deeds ;
Some splinters of his weapons (to the last,
As long as hand could hold, he held them fast)
Yet glittered, but at distance—hurled away
To rust beneath the dew and dashing spray.

The rest was nothing—save a life misspent,
And soul—but who shall answer where it went ?
'Tis ours to bear, not judge the dead ; and they
Who doom to hell, themselves are on the way,
Unless these bullies of eternal pains
Are pardoned their bad hearts for their worse brains.

XIII

The deed was over ! All were gone or ta'en,
The fugitive, the captive, or the slain.
Chained on the deck, where once, a gallant crew,
They stood with honour, were the wretched few
Survivors of the skirmish on the isle ;
But the last rock left no surviving spoil.
Cold lay they where they fell, and weltering,
While o'er them flapped the sea-bird's dewy wing,
Now wheeling nearer from the neighbouring surge,
And screaming high their harsh and hungry dirge :
But calm and careless heaved the wave below,
Eternal with unsympathetic flow ;
Far o'er its face the dolphins sported on,
And sprung the flying fish against the sun,
Till its dried wing relapsed from its brief height,
To gather moisture for another flight.

XIV

'Twas morn ; and Neuha, who by dawn of day
Swam smoothly forth to catch the rising ray,
And watch if aught approached the amphibious lair
Where lay her lover, saw a sail in air :
It flapped, it filled, and to the growing gale
Bent its broad arch ; her breath began to fail
With fluttering fear, her heart beat thick and high,
While yet a doubt sprung where its course might lie :
But no ! it came not ; fast and far away
The shadow lessened as it cleared the bay.
She gazed, and flung the sea-foam from her eyes,
To watch as for a rainbow in the skies.
On the horizon verged the distant deck,
Diminished, dwindled to a very speck—
Then vanished. All was ocean, all was joy !
Down plunged she through the cave to rouse her boy ;
Told all she had seen, and all she hoped, and all
That happy love could augur or recall ;
Sprung forth again, with Torquil following free
His bounding nereid over the broad sea ;
Swam round the rock, to where a shallow cleft

Hid the canoe that Neuha there had left
 Drifting along the tide, without an oar,
 That eve the strangers chased them from the shore;
 But when these vanished, she pursued her prow,
 Regained, and urged to where they found it now;
 Nor ever did more love and joy embark,
 Than now were wafted in that slender ark.

xv

Again their own shore rises on the view,
 No more polluted with a hostile hue;
 No sullen ship lay bristling o'er the foam,
 A floating dungeon:—all was hope and home!
 A thousand proas darted o'er the bay,
 With sounding shells, and heralded their way;
 The chiefs came down, around the people poured,
 And welcomed Torquil as a son restored;
 The women thronged, embracing and embraced
 By Neuha, asking where they had been chased,
 And how escaped? The tale was told; and then
 One acclamation rent the sky again;
 And from that hour a new tradition gave
 Their sanctuary the name of "Neuha's Cave."
 A hundred fires, far flickering from the height,
 Blazed o'er the general revel of the night,
 The feast in honour of the guest, returned
 To peace and pleasure, perilously earned;
 A night succeeded by such happy days
 As only the yet infant world displays.

NOTES

¹ [It was Dr. Johnson who said, "Claret is the liquor for boys; port for men; but he who aspires to be a hero (smiling) must drink brandy."—Boswell's Life.]

² The now celebrated bread-fruit, to transplant which Capt. Bligh's expedition was undertaken.

³ The ship in which Jason sailed in search of the Golden Fleece.

⁴ The first three sections are taken from an actual song of the Tonga islanders, of which a prose translation is given in "Mariner's Account of the Tonga Islands." Toobonai is not, however, one of them; but was one of those where Christian and the mutineers took refuge. I have altered and added, but have retained as much as possible of the original.

⁵ George Stewart.

⁶ The "ship of the desert" is the Oriental figure for the camel or dromedary, and they deserve the metaphor well—the former for his endurance, the latter for his swiftness.

⁷ "Lucullus, when frugality could charm,
 Had roasted turnips in the Sabine farm."—POPE.

⁸ The consul Nero, who made the unequalled march which deceived

Hannibal, and defeated Asdrubal; thereby accomplishing an achievement almost unrivalled in military annals. The first intelligence of his return, to Hannibal, was the sight of Asdrubal's head thrown into his camp. When Hannibal saw this, he exclaimed, with a sigh, that "Rome would now be the mistress of the world." And yet to this victory of Nero's it might be owing that his imperial namesake reigned at all. But the infamy of the one has eclipsed the glory of the other. When the name of "Nero" is heard, who thinks of the consul?—But such are human things!

⁹ When very young, about eight years of age, after an attack of scarlet fever at Aberdeen, I was removed by medical advice into the Highlands. Here I passed occasionally some summers, and from this period I date my love of mountainous countries. I can never forget the effect, a few years afterward in England, of the only thing I had long seen, even in miniature, of a mountain, in the Malvern Hills. After I returned to Cheltenham, I used to watch them every afternoon at sunset with a sensation which I can not describe. This was boyish enough; but I was then only thirteen years of age, and it was in the holidays.

¹⁰ The now well-known story of the loves of the nightingale and rose need not be more than alluded to, being sufficiently familiar to the Western and the Eastern reader.

¹¹ If the reader will apply to his ear the sea-shell on his chimney-piece, he will be aware of what is alluded to. If the text should appear obscure, he will find in "Gebir" the same idea, better expressed, in two lines. The poem I never read, but have heard the lines quoted by a more recondite reader, who seems to be of a different opinion from the Editor of the "Quarterly Review," who qualified it, in his answer to the critical reviewer of his "Juvenal," as trash of the worst and most insane description. It is to Mr. Landor, the author of "Gebir," so qualified, and of some Latin poems, which vie with Martial or Catullus in obscenity, that the immaculate Mr. Southey addresses his declamation against impurity.

¹² Hobbes, the father of Locke's and other philosophy, was an inveterate smoker—even to pipes beyond computation.

¹³ This rough but jovial ceremony, used in crossing the line, has been so often and so well described, that it need not be more than alluded to.

¹⁴ "That will do for the marines, but the sailors won't believe it," is an old saying; and one of the few fragments of former jealousies which still survive (in jest only) between these gallant services.

¹⁵ Archidamus, King of Sparta, and son of Agesilaus, when he saw a machine invented for the casting of stones and darts, exclaimed that it was the "grave of valour." The same story has been told of some knights on the first application of gunpowder; but the original anecdote is in Plutarch.

¹⁶ Of this cave (which is no fiction) the original will be found in the ninth chapter of Mariner's "Account of the Tonga Islands." I have taken the poetical liberty to transplant it to Toobonai, the last island where any distinct account is left of Christian and his comrades.

¹⁷ This may seem too minute for the general outline (in Mariner's "Account") from which it is taken. But few men have travelled without seeing something of the kind—on land, that is. Without adverting to Ellora, in Mungo Park's last journal (if my memory do not err, for there are eight years since I read the book) he mentions having met with a rock or mountain so exactly resembling a Gothic cathedral, that only minute inspection could convince him that it was a work of Nature.

¹⁸ The reader will recollect the epigram of the Greek anthology, or its translation into most of the modern languages:

"Whoe'er thou art, thy master see—
He was, or is, or is to be."

¹⁹ The tradition is attached to the story of Eloïsa, that when her body was lowered into the grave of Abelard (who had been buried twenty years), he opened his arms to receive her.

²⁰ In Thibault's account of Frederick the Second of Prussia, there is a singular relation of a young Frenchman, who with his mistress appeared to be of some rank. He enlisted and deserted at Schweidnitz; and after a desperate resistance was retaken, having killed an officer who attempted to seize him after he was wounded, by the discharge of his musket loaded with a button of his uniform. Some circumstances on his court-martial raised a great interest among his judges, who wished to discover his real situation in life, which he offered to disclose, but to the King only, to whom he requested permission to write. This was refused, and Frederick was filled with the greatest indignation, from baffled curiosity, or some other motive, when he understood that his request had been denied.

POEMS TO THYRZA

TO THYRZA

WITHOUT a stone to mark the spot,
And say, what Truth might well have said,
By all, save one, perchance forgot,
Ah! wherefore art thou lowly laid?

By many a shore and many a sea
Divided, yet beloved in vain;
The past, the future fled to thee,
To bid us meet—no—ne'er again!

Could this have been—a word, a look,
That softly said, "We part in peace,"
Had taught my bosom how to brook,
With fainter sighs, thy soul's release.

And didst thou not, since Death for thee
Prepared a light and pangless dart,
Once long for him thou ne'er shalt see,
Who held, and holds thee in his heart?

Oh! who like him had watched thee here?
Or sadly marked thy glazing eye,
In that dread hour ere death appear,
When silent sorrow fears to sigh.

Till all was past! But when no more
'Twas thine to reck of human woe,
Affection's heart-drops, gushing o'er,
Had flowed as fast—as now they flow.

Shall they not flow, when many a day
In these, to me, deserted towers,
Ere called but for a time away,
Affection's mingling tears were ours?

Ours too the glance none saw beside;
 The smile none else might understand;
 The whispered thought of hearts allied,
 The pressure of the thrilling hand;

The kiss, so guiltless and refined,
 That Love each warmer wish forbore;
 Those eyes proclaimed so pure a mind,
 Even passion blushed to plead for more.

The tone, that taught me to rejoice,
 When prone, unlike thee, to repine;
 The song, celestial from thy voice,
 But sweet to me from none but thine;

The pledge we wore—I wear it still,
 But where is thine?—Ah! where art thou?
 Oft have I borne the weight of ill,
 But never bent beneath till now!

Well hast thou left in life's best bloom
 The cup of woe for me to drain.
 If rest alone be in the tomb,
 I would not wish thee here again;

But if in worlds more blest than this
 Thy virtues seek a fitter sphere,
 Impart some portion of thy bliss,
 To wean me from mine anguish here.

Teach me—too early taught by thee!
 To bear, forgiving and forgiven:
 On earth thy love was such to me;
 It fain would form my hope in heaven!

October 11, 1811.

AWAY, AWAY, YE NOTES OF WOE

AWAY, away, ye notes of woe!
 Be silent, thou once soothing strain,
 Or I must flee from hence—for oh!
 I dare not trust those sounds again.
 To me they speak of brighter days—
 But lull the chords, for now, alas!
 I must not think, I may not gaze,
 On what I am—on what I was.

The voice that made those sounds more sweet
 Is hushed, and all their charms are fled;
 And now their softest notes repeat
 A dirge, an anthem o'er the dead!
 Yes, Thyrza! yes, they breathe of thee,
 Beloved dust! since dust thou art;
 And all that once was harmony
 Is worse than discord to my heart.

'Tis silent all!—but on my ear
 The well-remembered echoes thrill;
 I hear a voice I would not hear,
 A voice that now might well be still:
 Yet oft my doubting soul 'twill shake;
 Even slumber owns its gentle tone,
 Till consciousness will vainly wake
 To listen, though the dream be flown.

Sweet Thyrza! waking as in sleep,
 Thou art but now a lovely dream;
 A star that trembled o'er the deep,
 Then turned from earth its tender beam.
 But he who through life's dreary way
 Must pass, when heaven is veiled in wrath,
 Will long lament the vanished ray
 That scattered gladness o'er his path.

December 6, 1811.

ONE STRUGGLE MORE, AND I AM FREE

ONE struggle more, and I am free
 From pangs that rend my heart in twain;
 One last long sigh to love and thee,
 Then back to busy life again.
 It suits me well to mingle now
 With things that never pleased before;
 Though every joy is fled below,
 What future grief can touch me more?

Then bring me wine, the banquet bring;
 Man was not formed to live alone:
 I'll be that light, unmeaning thing,
 That smiles with all, and weeps with none.
 It was not thus in days more dear,
 It never would have been, but thou

Hast fled, and left me lonely here ;
Thou'rt nothing—all are nothing now.

In vain my lyre would lightly breathe !
The smile that sorrow fain would wear
But mocks the woe that lurks beneath,
Like roses o'er a sepulchre.
Though gay companions o'er the bowl
Dispel a while the sense of ill ;
Though pleasure fires the maddening soul,
The heart—the heart is lonely still !

On many a lone and lovely night
It soothed to gaze upon the sky ;
For then I deemed the heavenly light
Shone sweetly on thy pensive eye :
And oft I thought at Cynthia's noon,
When sailing o'er the Ægean wave,
"Now Thyrza gazes on that moon—"
Alas, it gleamed upon her grave !

When stretched on fever's sleepless bed,
And sickness shrunk my throbbing veins,
" 'Tis comfort still," I faintly said,
"That Thyrza can not know my pains":
Like freedom to the time-worn slave,
A boon 'tis idle then to give,
Relenting Nature vainly gave
My life, when Thyrza ceased to live !

My Thyrza's pledge in better days,
When love and life alike were new !
How different now thou meet'st my gaze !
How tinged by time with sorrow's hue !
The heart that gave itself with thee
Is silent—ah, were mine as still !
Though cold as e'en the dead can be,
It feels, it sickens with the chill.

Thou bitter pledge ! thou mournful token !
Though painful, welcome to my breast !
Still, still, preserve that love unbroken,
Or break the heart to which thou'rt pressed !
Time tempers love, but not removes,
More hallowed when its hope is fled :
Oh ! what are thousand living loves
To that which can not quit the dead ?

EUTHANASIA

WHEN Time, or soon or late, shall bring
The dreamless sleep that lulls the dead,
Oblivion! may thy languid wing
Wave gently o'er my dying bed!

No band of friends or heirs be there,
To weep or wish the coming blow:
No maiden, with dishevelled hair,
To feel, or feign, decorous woe.

But silent let me sink to earth,
With no officious mourners near:
I would not mar one hour of mirth,
Nor startle friendship with a tear.

Yet Love, if Love in such an hour
Could nobly check its useless sighs,
Might then exert its latest power
In her who lives and him who dies.

'Twere sweet, my Psyche! to the last
Thy features still serene to see:
Forgetful of its struggles past,
E'en Pain itself should smile on thee.

But vain the wish—for Beauty still
Will shrink, as shrinks the ebbing breath;
And woman's tears, produced at will,
Deceive in life, unman in death.

Then lonely be my latest hour,
Without regret, without a groan;
For thousands Death hath ceased to lower,
And pain been transient or unknown.

"Ay, but to die, and go," alas!
Where all have gone, and all must go!
To be the nothing that I was
Ere born to life and living woe.

Count o'er thy joys thine hours have seen,
Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
And know, whatever thou hast been,
'Tis something better not to be.

AND THOU ART DEAD, AS YOUNG AS FAIR

"Heu, quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam tui meminisse!"

AND thou art dead, as young and fair
As aught of mortal birth;
And form so soft, and charms so rare,
Too soon returned to Earth!
Though Earth received them in her bed,
And o'er the spot the crowd may tread
In carelessness or mirth,
There is an eye which could not brook
A moment on that grave to look.

I will not ask where thou liest low,
Nor gaze upon the spot;
There flowers or weeds at will may grow,
So I behold them not:
It is enough for me to prove
That what I loved, and long must love,
Like common earth can rot;
To me there needs no stone to tell,
'Tis nothing that I loved so well.

Yet did I love thee to the last
As fervently as thou,
Who didst not change through all the past,
And canst not alter now.
The love where Death has set his seal,
Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
Nor falsehood disavow;
And, what were worse, thou canst not see
Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

The better days of life were ours;
The worst can be but mine:
The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers,
Shall never more be thine.
The silence of that dreamless sleep
I envy now too much to weep;
Nor need I to repine
That all those charms have passed away;
I might have watched through long decay.

The flower in ripened bloom unmatched
Must fall the earliest prey;
Though by no hand untimely snatched,
The leaves must drop away:

And yet it were a greater grief
 To watch it withering, leaf by leaf,
 Than see it plucked to-day ;
 Since earthly eye but ill can bear
 To trace the change to foul from fair.

I know not if I could have borne
 To see thy beauties fade ;
 The night that followed such a morn
 Had worn a deeper shade :
 Thy day without a cloud hath passed,
 And thou wert lovely to the last :
 Extinguished, not decayed ;
 As stars that shoot along the sky
 Shine brightest as they fall from high.

As once I wept, if I could weep,
 My tears might well be shed,
 To think I was not near to keep
 One vigil o'er thy bed ;
 To gaze, how fondly ! on thy face,
 To fold thee in a faint embrace,
 Uphold thy drooping head ;
 And show that love, however vain,
 Nor thou nor I can feel again.

Yet how much less it were to gain,
 Though thou hast left me free,
 The loveliest things that still remain,
 Than thus remember thee !
 The all of thine that can not die
 Through dark and dread Eternity
 Returns again to me,
 And more thy buried love endears
 Than aught, except its living years.

February, 1812.

IF SOMETIMES IN THE HAUNTS OF MEN

If sometimes in the haunts of men
 Thine image from my breast may fade,
 The lonely hour presents again
 The semblance of thy gentle shade :
 And now that sad and silent hour
 Thus much of thee can still restore,
 And sorrow unobserved may pour
 The plaint she dare not speak before.

Oh, pardon that in crowds a while
I waste one thought I owe to thee.
And, self-condemned, appear to smile,
Unfaithful to thy memory !
Nor deem that memory less dear,
That then I seem not to repine ;
I would not fools should overhear
One sigh that should be wholly thine.

If not the goblet pass unquaffed,
It is not drained to banish care ;
The cup must hold a deadlier draught,
That brings a Lethe for despair.
And could Oblivion set my soul
From all her troubled visions free,
I'd dash to earth the sweetest bowl
That drowned a single thought of thee.

For wert thou vanished from my mind,
Where could my vacant bosom turn ?
And who would then remain behind
To honour thine abandoned urn ?
No, no—it is my sorrow's pride
That last dear duty to fulfil ;
Though all the world forget beside,
'Tis meet that I remember still.

For well I know that such had been
Thy gentle care for him, who now
Unmourned shall quit this mortal scene,
Where none regarded him, but thou :
And, oh ! I feel in that was given
A blessing never meant for me ;
Thou wert too like a dream of Heaven,
For earthly love to merit thee.

March 14, 1812.

POEMS ON NAPOLEON

ODE TO NAPOLEON

"Expende Annibalem:—quot libras in duce summo
Invenies?"

—JUVENAL, Sat. x.

"The Emperor Nepos was acknowledged by the Senate, by the Italians, and by the Provincials of Gaul; his moral virtues, and military talents, were loudly celebrated; and those who derived any private benefit from his government announced in prophetic strains the restoration of public felicity. . . . By this shameful abdication, he protracted his life a few years, in a very ambiguous state, between an Emperor and an Exile, till——."—GIBBON'S "DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE."

'Tis done—but yesterday a King!
And armed with Kings to strive—
And now thou art a nameless thing;
So abject—yet alive!
Is this the man of thousand thrones,
Who strewed our hearth with hostile bones,
And can he thus survive?
Since he, miscalled the Morning Star,
Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

Ill-minded man! why scourge thy kind
Who bowed so low the knee?
By gazing on thyself grown blind,
Thou taught'st the rest to see.
With might unquestioned—power to save—
Thine only gift hath been the grave,
To those that worshipped thee;
Nor till thy fall could mortals guess
Ambition's less than littleness!

Thanks for that lesson—it will teach
To after-warriors more,
Than high Philosophy can preach,
And vainly preached before.

That spell upon the minds of men
 Breaks never to unite again,
 That led them to adore
 Those Pagod things of sabre sway,
 With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

The triumph, and the vanity,
 The rapture of the strife—¹
 The earthquake voice of Victory,
 To thee the breath of life;
 The sword, the sceptre, and that sway
 Which man seemed made but to obey,
 Wherewith renown was rife—
 All quelled!—Dark Spirit! what must be
 The madness of thy memory!

The Desolator desolate!
 The Victor overthrown!
 The Arbiter of others' fate
 A Suppliant for his own!
 Is it some yet imperial hope,
 That with such change can calmly cope?
 Or dread of death alone?
 To die a prince—or live a slave—
 Thy choice is most ignobly brave!

He who of old would rend the oak,
 Dreamed not of the rebound;
 Chained by the trunk he vainly broke—
 Alone—how looked he round?
 Thou, in the sternness of thy strength,
 An equal deed hast done at length,
 And darker fate hast found:
 He fell the forest prowlers' prey;
 But thou must eat thy heart away!

The Roman, when his burning heart
 Was slaked with blood of Rome,
 Threw down the dagger—dared depart,
 In savage grandeur home—
 He dared depart in utter scorn
 Of men that such a yoke had borne,
 Yet left him such a doom!
 His only glory was that hour
 Of self-upheld abandoned power.

The Spaniard, when the lust of sway
 Had lost its quickening spell,

Cast crowns for rosaries away,
An empire for a cell;
A strict accountant of his beads,
A subtle disputant on creeds,
His dotage trifled well:
Yet better had he neither known
A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

But thou—from thy reluctant hand
The thunderbolt is wrung—
Too late thou leav'st the high command
To which thy weakness clung;
All Evil Spirit as thou art,
It is enough to grieve the heart
To see thine own unstrung;
To think that God's fair world hath been
The footstool of a thing so mean!

And Earth hath spilt her blood for him,
Who thus can hoard his own!
And Monarchs bowed the trembling limb,
And thanked him for a throne!
Fair Freedom! may we hold thee dear,
When thus thy mightiest foes their fear
In humblest guise have shown.
Oh! ne'er may tyrant leave behind
A brighter name to lure mankind!

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,
Nor written thus in vain—
Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,
Or deepen every stain:
If thou hadst died as honour dies,
Some new Napoleon might arise,
To shame the world again—
But who would soar the solar height,
To set in such a starless night?

Weighed in the balance, hero dust
Is vile as vulgar clay;
Thy scales, Mortality! are just
To all that pass away:
But yet methought the living great
Some higher sparks should animate,
To dazzle and dismay;
Nor deemed Contempt could thus make mirth
Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

And she, proud Austria's mournful flower,
 Thy still imperial bride;
 How bears her breast the torturing hour?
 Still clings she to thy side?
 Must she, too, bend—must she, too, share,
 Thy late repentance, long despair,
 Thou throneless Homicide?
 If still she loves thee, hoard that gem;
 'Tis worth thy vanished diadem!

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,
 And gaze upon the sea;
 That element may meet thy smile—
 It ne'er was ruled by thee!
 Or trace with thine all idle hand,
 In loitering mood upon the sand,
 That Earth is now as free!
 That Corinth's pedagogue hath now
 Transferred his by-word to thy brow.

Thou Timour! in his captive's cage
 What thoughts will there be thine,
 While brooding in thy prisoned rage?
 But one—"The world was mine!"
 Unless, like he of Babylon,
 All sense is with thy sceptre gone,
 Life will not long confine
 That spirit poured so widely forth—
 So long obeyed—so little worth!

Or, like the thief of fire from heaven,
 Wilt thou withstand the shock?
 And share with him, the unforgiven,
 His vulture and his rock?
 Foredoomed by God—by man accurst,
 And that last act, though not thy worst,
 The very Fiend's arch mock;
 He, in his fall preserved his pride,
 And, if a mortal, had as proudly died!

ODE FROM THE FRENCH

I

We do not curse thee, Waterloo!
 Though Freedom's blood thy plain bedew:
 There 'twas shed, but is not sunk—
 Rising from each gory trunk,

Like the water-spout from ocean,
 With a strong and growing motion—
 It soars, and mingles in the air,
 With that of lost Labedoyère—
 With that of him whose honoured grave
 Contains the "bravest of the brave."
 A crimson cloud it spreads and glows,
 But shall return to whence it rose:
 When 'tis full 'twill burst asunder—
 Never yet was heard such thunder,
 As then shall shake the world with wonder—
 Never yet was seen such lightning
 As o'er heaven shall then be bright'ning!
 Like the Wormwood Star foretold,
 By the sainted Seer of old,
 Showering down a fiery flood,
 Turning rivers into blood.²

II

The chief has fallen! but not by you,
 Vanquishers of Waterloo!
 When the soldier-citizen
 Swayed not o'er his fellow-men—
 Save in deeds that led them on
 Where Glory smiled on Freedom's son—
 Who, of all the despots banded,
 With that youthful chief competed?
 Who could boast o'er France defeated,
 Till lone Tyranny commanded?
 Till, goaded by ambition's sting,
 The Hero sunk into the King?
 Then he fell:—so perish all,
 Who would men by man enthrall!

III

And thou, too, of the snow-white plume!
 Whose realm refused thee even a tomb;
 Better hadst thou still been leading
 France o'er hosts of hirelings bleeding,
 Than sold thyself to death and shame
 For a meanly royal name;
 Such as he of Naples wears,
 Who thy blood-bought title bears,
 Little didst thou deem, when dashing
 On thy war-horse through the ranks,
 Like a stream which bursts its banks,
 While helmets cleft, and sabres clashing,
 Shone and shivered fast around thee—

Of the fate at last which found thee !
 Was that haughty plume laid low
 By a slave's dishonest blow ?
 Once—as the moon sways o'er the tide,
 It rolled in air, the warrior's guide ;
 Through the smoke-created night
 Of the black and sulphurous fight,
 The soldier raised his seeking eye
 To catch that crest's ascendancy—
 And as it onward rolling rose,
 So moved his heart upon our foes.
 There, where death's brief pang was quickest,
 And the battle's wreck lay thickest,
 Strewed beneath the advancing banner
 Of the eagle's burning crest—
 (There with thunder clouds to fan her,
 Who could then her wing arrest—
 Victory beaming from her breast ?)
 While the broken line enlarging
 Fell, or fled along the plain ;
 There be sure was Murat charging !
 There he ne'er shall charge again !

IV

O'er glories gone the invaders march,
 Weep Triumph o'er each levelled arch—
 But let Freedom rejoice,
 With her heart in her voice ;
 But her hand on her sword,
 Doubly shall she be adored ;
 France hath twice too well been taught
 The "moral lesson" dearly bought—
 Her safety sits not on a throne,
 With Capet or Napoleon !
 But in equal rights and laws,
 Hearts and hands in one great cause—
 Freedom, such as God hath given
 Unto all beneath His heaven,
 With their breath, and from their birth,
 Though Guilt would sweep it from the earth ;
 With a fierce and lavish hand
 Scattering nations' wealth like sand ;
 Pouring nations' blood like water,
 In imperial seas of slaughter !

V

But the heart and the mind,
 And the voice of mankind,

Shall arise in communion—
 And who shall resist that proud union ?
 The time is past when swords subdued—
 Man may die—the soul's renewed :
 Even in this low world of care
 Freedom ne'er shall want an heir ;
 Millions breathe but to inherit
 Her forever bounding spirit—
 When once more her hosts assemble,
 Tyrants shall believe and tremble—
 Smile they at this idle threat ?
 Crimson tears will follow yet.

TO NAPOLEON

FROM THE FRENCH

MUST thou go, my glorious chief,³
 Severed from thy faithful few ?
 Who can tell thy warriors' grief,
 Maddening o'er that long adieu ?
 Woman's love, and friendship's zeal,
 Dear as both have been to me—
 What are they to all I feel,
 With a soldier's faith for thee ?

Idol of the soldier's soul !
 First in fight, but mightiest now :
 Many could a world control ;
 Thee alone no doom can bow.
 By thy side for years I dared
 Death ; and envied those who fell,
 When their dying shout was heard,
 Blessing him they served so well.⁴

Would that I were cold with those,
 Since this hour I live to see ;
 When the doubts of coward foes
 Scarce dare trust a man with thee.
 Dreading each should set thee free !
 Oh ! although in dungeons pent,
 All their chains were light to me,
 Gazing on thy soul unbent.

Would the sycophants of him
 Now so deaf to duty's prayer,

Were his borrowed glories dim,
 In his native darkness share?
 Were that world this hour his own,
 All thou calmly dost resign,
 Could he purchase with that throne
 Hearts like those which still are thine?

My chief, my king, my friend, adieu!
 Never did I droop before;
 Never to my sovereign sue,
 As his foes I now implore:
 All I ask is to divide
 Every peril he must brave;
 Sharing by the hero's side
 His fall, his exile, and his grave.

NAPOLEON'S FAREWELL

FROM THE FRENCH

FAREWELL to the Land, where the gloom of my glory
 Arose and o'ershadowed the earth with her name—
 She abandons me now—but the page of her story,
 The brightest or blackest, is filled with my fame.
 I have warred with a world which vanquished me only
 When the meteor of conquest allured me too far;
 I have coped with the nations which dread me thus lonely,
 The last single captive to millions in war.

Farewell to thee, France! when thy diadem crowned me,
 I made thee the gem and the wonder of earth—
 But thy weakness decrees I should leave as I found thee,
 Decayed in thy glory, and sunk in thy worth.
 Oh! for the veteran hearts that were wasted
 In strife with the storm, when their battles were won—
 Then the Eagle, whose gaze in that moment was blasted,
 Had still soared with eyes fixed on victory's sun!

Farewell to thee, France!—but when Liberty rallies
 Once more in thy regions, remember me then—
 The violet still grows in the depth of thy valleys;
 Though withered, thy tears will unfold it again—
 Yet, yet I may baffle the hosts that surround us,
 And yet may thy heart leap awake to my voice—
 There are links which must break in the chain that has bound us,
 Then turn thee and call on the Chief of thy choice!

ON THE STAR OF "THE LEGION OF HONOUR"

FROM THE FRENCH

STAR of the brave!—whose beam hath shed
Such glory o'er the quick and dead—
Thou radiant and adored deceit!
Which millions rushed in arms to greet—
Wild meteor of immortal birth!
Why rise in heaven to set on Earth?

Souls of slain heroes formed thy rays;
Eternity flashed through thy blaze;
The music of thy martial sphere
Was fame on high and honour here;
And thy light broke on human eyes,
Like a volcano of the skies.

Like lava rolled thy stream of blood,
And swept down empires with its flood;
Earth rocked beneath thee to her base,
As thou didst lighten through all space;
And the shorn sun grew dim in air,
And set while thou wert dwelling there.

Before thee rose, and with thee grew,
A rainbow of the loveliest hue
Of three bright colours, each divine,⁶
And fit for that celestial sign;
For Freedom's hand had blended them,
Like tints in an immortal gem.

One tint was of the sunbeam's dyes;
One, the blue depth of Seraph's eyes:
One, the pure Spirit's veil of white
Had robed in radiance of its light:
The three so mingled did beseech
The texture of a heavenly dream.

Star of the brave! thy ray is pale,
And darkness must again prevail!
But, O thou Rainbow of the free!
Our tears and blood must flow for thee
When thy bright promise fades away,
Our life is but a load of clay.

And Freedom hallows with her tread
The silent cities of the dead;

For beautiful in death are they
 Who proudly fall in her array ;
 And soon, O Goddess ! may we be
 For evermore with them or thee !

NOTES

¹ "Certaminis gaudia"—the expression of Attila in his harangue to his army, previous to the battle of Chalons, given in Cassiodorus.

² See Rev. viii, 7: "The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood." Ver. 8, "And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood." Ver. 10, "And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters." Ver. 11, "And the name of the star is called Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."

³ "All wept, but particularly Savary, and a Polish officer, who had been exalted from the ranks by Bonaparte. He clung to his master's knees: wrote a letter to Lord Keith, entreating permission to accompany him, even in the most menial capacity, which could not be admitted."

⁴ "At Waterloo, one man was seen, whose left arm was shattered by a cannon-ball, to wrench it off with the other, and throwing it up in the air, exclaimed to his comrades, 'Vive l'Empereur, jusqu'à la mort !' There were many other instances of the like. This, however, you may depend on as true."—*Private Letter from Brussels.*

⁵ The tricolour.

HEBREW MELODIES

ADVERTISEMENT

THE subsequent poems were written at the request of my friend the Hon. Douglas Kinnaid, for a Selection of Hebrew Melodies, and have been published, with the music, arranged by Mr. Braham and Mr. Nathan.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

SHE walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace,
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express,
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

THE HARP THE MONARCH MINSTREL SWEPT

THE harp the monarch minstrel swept,
The King of men, the loved of Heaven,

Which Music hallowed while she wept
 O'er tones her heart of hearts had given,
 Redoubled be her tears, its chords are riven!
 It softened men of iron mould,
 It gave them virtues not their own;
 No ear so dull, no soul so cold,
 That felt not, fired not to the tone,
 Till David's lyre grew mightier than his throne.

It told the triumphs of our King,
 It wafted glory to our God;
 It made our gladdened valleys ring,
 The cedars bow, the mountains nod;
 Its sound aspired to heaven, and there abode!
 Since then, though heard on earth no more,
 Devotion, and her daughter Love,
 Still bid the bursting spirit soar
 To sounds that seem as from above,
 In dreams that day's broad light can not remove.

IF THAT HIGH WORLD

If that high world, which lies beyond
 Our own, surviving Love endears;
 If there the cherished heart be fond,
 The eye the same, except in tears—
 How welcome those untrodden spheres!
 How sweet this very hour to die!
 To soar from earth, and find all fears
 Lost in thy light—Eternity!

It must be so: 'tis not for self
 That we so tremble on the brink;
 And striving to o'erleap the gulf,
 Yet cling to Being's severing link.
 Oh! in that future let us think
 To hold each heart the heart that shares;
 With them the immortal waters drink,
 And soul in soul grow deathless theirs!

THE WILD GAZELLE

THE wild gazelle on Judah's hills
 Exulting yet may bound,
 And drink from all the living rills
 That gush on holy ground;
 Its airy step and glorious eye
 May glance in tameless transport by:

A step as fleet, an eye more bright,
 Hath Judah witnessed there;
 And o'er her scenes of lost delight
 Inhabitants more fair.
 The cedars wave on Lebanon,
 But Judah's statelier maids are gone!

More blest each palm that shades those plains
 Than Israel's scattered race;
 For, taking root, it there remains
 In solitary grace:
 It can not quit its place of birth,
 It will not live in other earth.

But we must wander witheringly,
 In other lands to die;
 And where our fathers' ashes be,
 Our own may never lie:
 Our temple hath not left a stone,
 And Mockery sits on Salem's throne.

OH! WEEP FOR THOSE

OH! weep for those that wept by Babel's stream,
 Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a dream;
 Weep for the harp of Judah's broken shell;
 Mourn—where their God hath dwelt the Godless dwell!

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet?
 And when shall Zion's songs again seem sweet?
 And Judah's melody once more rejoice
 The hearts that leaped before its heavenly voice?

Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
 How shall ye flee away and be at rest?
 The wild-dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,
 Mankind their country—Israel but the grave!

ON JORDAN'S BANKS

ON Jordan's banks the Arab's camels stray,
On Sion's hill the False One's votaries pray,
The Baal-adorer bows on Sinai's steep—
Yet there—even there—O God! Thy thunders sleep:

There—where Thy finger scorched the tablet stone!
There—where Thy shadow to Thy people shone!
Thy glory shrouded in its garb of fire:
Thyself—none living see and not expire!

Oh! in the lightning let Thy glance appear;
Sweep from his shivered hand the oppressor's spear:
How long by tyrants shall Thy land be trod!
How long Thy temple worshipless, O God!

JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER

SINCE our Country, our God—oh, my sire!
Demand that thy daughter expire;
Since thy triumph was bought by thy vow—
Strike the bosom that's bared for thee now!

And the voice of my mourning is o'er,
And the mountains behold me no more:
If the hand that I love lay me low,
There can not be pain in the blow!

And of this, oh, my father! be sure—
That the blood of thy child is as pure
As the blessing I beg ere it flow,
And the last thought that soothes me below.

Though the virgins of Salem lament,
Be the judge and the hero unbent!
I have won the great battle for thee,
And my father and country are free!

When this blood of thy giving hath gushed,
When the voice that thou lovest is hushed,
Let my memory still be thy pride,
And forget not I smiled as I died!

OH! SNATCHED AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM

OH! snatched away in beauty's bloom,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom.

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And lingering pause and lightly tread;
Fond wretch! as if her step disturbed the dead!

Away! ye know that tears are vain,
That death nor heeds nor hears distress:
Will this unteach us to complain?
Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou—who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

MY SOUL IS DARK

My soul is dark—oh! quickly string
The harp I yet can brook to hear;
And let thy gentle fingers fling
Its melting murmurs o'er mine ear.
If in this heart a hope be dear,
That sound shall charm it forth again:
If in these eyes there lurk a tear,
'Twill flow, and cease to burn my brain.

But bid the strain be wild and deep,
Nor let thy notes of joy be first:
I tell thee, minstrel, I must weep,
Or else this heavy heart shall burst;
For it hath been by sorrow nursed,
And ached in sleepless silence long;
And now 'tis doomed to know the worst,
And break at once—or yield to song.

I SAW THEE WEEP

I SAW thee weep—the big bright tear
Came o'er that eye of blue;
And then methought it did appear
A violet dropping dew:
I saw thee smile—the sapphire's blaze
Beside thee ceased to shine;
It could not match the living rays
That filled that glance of thine.

As clouds from yonder sun receive
A deep and mellow dye,
Which scarce the shade of coming eve
Can banish from the sky,
Those smiles unto the moodiest mind
Their own pure joy impart;
Their sunshine leaves a glow behind
That lightens o'er the heart.

THY DAYS ARE DONE

THY days are done, thy fame begun;
Thy country's strains record
The triumphs of her chosen Son,
The slaughters of his sword;
The deeds he did, the fields he won,
The freedom he restored!

Though thou art fallen, while we are free
Thou shalt not taste of death!
The generous blood that flowed from thee
Disdained to sink beneath:
Within our veins its currents be,
Thy spirit on our breath!

Thy name, our charging hosts along,
Shall be the battle-word!
Thy fall, the theme of choral song
From virgin voices poured!
To weep would do thy glory wrong;
Thou shalt not be deplored.

SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE

WARRIORS and chiefs! should the shaft or the sword
Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,
Heed not the corse, though a king's, in your path:
Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath!

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,
Should the soldiers of Saul look away from the foe,
Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet!
Mine be the doom which they dared not to meet.

Farewell to others, but never we part,
Heir to my royalty, son of my heart!
Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,
Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-day.

SAUL

THOU whose spell can raise the dead
Bid the prophet's form appear.
"Samuel, raise thy buried head!
King, behold the phantom seer!"

Earth yawned; he stood the centre of a cloud:
Light changed its hue, retiring from his shroud.
Death stood all glassy in his fixed eye;
His hand was withered, and his veins were dry;
His foot, in bony whiteness, glittered there,
Shrunk and sinewless, and ghastly bare;
From lips that moved not, and unbreathing frame,
Like caverned winds, the hollow accents came.
Saul saw, and fell to earth, as falls the oak,
At once, and blasted by the thunder-stroke.

"Why is my sleep disquieted?
Who is he that calls the dead?
Is it thou, O King? Behold,
Bloodless are these limbs, and cold:
Such are mine; and such shall be
Thine to-morrow, when with me:
Ere the coming day is done,
Such shalt thou be, such thy son.

Fare thee well, but for a day,
Then we mix our mouldering clay.
Thou, thy race, lie pale and low,
Pierced by shafts of many a bow;
And the falchion by thy side
To thy heart thy hand shall guide:
Crownless, breathless, headless fall,
Son and sire, the house of Saul."

"ALL IS VANITY, SAITH THE PREACHER"

FAME, wisdom, love, and power were mine,
And health and youth possessed me;
My goblets blushed from every vine,
And lovely forms caressed me;
I sunned my heart in beauty's eyes,
And felt my soul grow tender;
All earth can give, or mortal prize,
Was mine of regal splendour.

I strive to number o'er what days
Remembrance can discover,
Which all that life or earth displays
Would lure me to live over.
There rose no day, there rolled no hour
Of pleasure unembittered;
And not a trapping decked my power
That galled not while it glittered.

The serpent of the field, by art
And spells, is won from harming;
But that which coils around the heart,
Oh! who hath power of charming?
It will not list to wisdom's lore,
Nor music's voice can lure it;
But there it stings for evermore
The soul that must endure it.

WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS SUFFERING CLAY

WHEN coldness wraps this suffering clay,
 Ah! whither strays the immortal mind?
 It can not die, it can not stray,
 But leaves its darkened dust behind.
 Then, unembodied, doth it trace
 By steps each planet's heavenly way?
 Or fill at once the realms of space,
 A thing of eyes, that all survey?

Eternal, boundless, undecayed,
 A thought unseen, but seeing all,
 All, all in earth or skies displayed
 Shall it survey, shall it recall:
 Each fainter trace that memory holds
 So darkly of departed years,
 In one broad glance the soul beholds,
 And all that was at once appears.

Before Creation peopled earth,
 Its eye shall roll through chaos back;
 And where the farthest heaven had birth,
 The spirit trace its rising track.
 And where the future mars or makes,
 Its glance dilate o'er all to be,
 While sun is quenched or system breaks,
 Fixed in its own eternity.

Above or Love, Hope, Hate, or Fear,
 It lives all passionless and pure:
 An age shall fleet like earthly year;
 Its years as moments shall endure.
 Away, away, without a wing,
 O'er all, through all, its thought shall fly;
 A nameless and eternal thing,
 Forgetting what it was to die.

VISION OF BELSHAZZAR

THE King was on his throne,
 The Satraps thronged the hall;
 A thousand bright lamps shone
 O'er that high festival.

A thousand cups of gold,
 In Judah deemed divine—
 Jehovah's vessels hold
 The godless Heathen's wine.

In that same hour and hall,
 The fingers of a hand
 Came forth against the wall,
 And wrote as if on sand;
 The fingers of a man—
 A solitary hand
 Along the letters ran,
 And traced them like a wand.

The monarch saw, and shook,
 And bade no more rejoice;
 All bloodless waxed his look,
 And tremulous his voice.
 "Let the men of lore appear,
 The wisest of the earth,
 And expound the words of fear,
 Which mar our royal mirth."

Chaldea's seers are good,
 But here they have no skill;
 And the unknown letters stood
 Untold and awful still.
 And Babel's men of age
 Are wise and deep in lore;
 But now they were not sage,
 They saw—but knew no more.

A captive in the land,
 A stranger and a youth,
 He heard the King's command,
 He saw that writing's truth,
 The lamps around were bright,
 The prophecy in view;
 He read it on that night—
 The morrow proved it true:

"Belshazzar's grave is made,
 His kingdom passed away,
 He, in the balance weighed,
 Is light and worthless clay.

The shroud his robe of state,
 His canopy the stone;
 The Mede is at his gate!
 The Persian on his throne!"

SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS

SUN of the sleepless! melancholy star!
 Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,
 That show'st the darkness thou canst not dispel,
 How like art thou to joy remembered well!
 So gleams the past, the light of other days,
 Which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays;
 A night-beam Sorrow watcheth to behold,
 Distinct, but distant—clear, but oh, how cold!

WERE MY BOSOM AS FALSE AS THOU DEEM'ST IT TO BE

WERE my bosom as false as thou deem'st it to be,
 I need not have wandered from far Galilee;
 It was but abjuring my creed to efface
 The curse which, thou say'st, is the crime of my race:

If the bad never triumph, then God is with thee!
 If the slave only sin, thou art spotless and free!
 If the exile on earth is an outcast on high,
 Live on in thy faith, but in mine I will die.

I have lost for that faith more than thou canst bestow,
 As the God who permits thee to prosper doth know:
 In His hand is my heart and my hope—and in thine
 The land and the life which for Him I resign.

HEROD'S LAMENT FOR MARIAMNE

OH, Mariamne! now for thee
 The heart for which thou bled'st is bleeding:
 Revenge is lost in agony,
 And wild remorse to rage succeeding.

Oh, Mariamne! where art thou?
 Thou canst not hear my bitter pleading.
 Ah! couldst thou—thou wouldst pardon now,
 Though Heaven were to my prayer unheeding.

And is she dead?—and did they dare
 Obey my frenzy's jealous raving?
 My wrath hath doomed my own despair:
 The sword that smote her's o'er me waving.—
 But thou art cold, my murdered love!
 And this dark heart is vainly craving
 For her who soars alone above,
 And leaves my soul unworthy saving.

She's gone, who shared my diadem;
 She sunk, with her my joys entombing;
 I swept that flower from Judah's stem,
 Whose leaves for me alone were blooming;
 And mine's the guilt, and mine the hell,
 This bosom's desolation dooming;
 And I have earned those tortures well,
 Which unconsumed are still consuming!

ON THE DAY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERU- SALEM BY TITUS

FROM the last hill that looks on thy once holy dome
 I beheld thee, O Sion! when rendered to Rome.
 'Twas thy last sun went down, and the flames of thy fall
 Flashed back on the last glance I gave to thy wall.

I looked for thy temple, I looked for my home,
 And forgot for a moment the bondage to come;
 I beheld but the death-fire that fed on thy fane,
 And the fast-fettered hands that made vengeance in vain.

On many an eve, the high spot whence I gazed
 Had reflected the last beam of day as it blazed;
 While I stood on the height, and beheld the decline
 Of the rays from the mountain that shone on thy shrine.

And now on that mountain I stood on that day,
 But I marked not the twilight beam melting away;
 Oh! would that the lightning had glared in its stead,
 And the thunderbolt burst on the conqueror's head!

But the gods of the Pagan shall never profane
 The shrine where Jehovah disdained not to reign;
 And scattered and scorned as Thy people may be,
 Our worship, O Father! is only for Thee.

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT DOWN AND WEPT

We sate down and wept by the waters
 Of Babel, and thought of the day
 When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,
 Made Salem's high places his prey;
 And ye, O her desolate daughters!
 Were scattered all weeping away.

While sadly we gazed on the river
 Which rolled on in freedom below,
 They demanded the song; but, oh, never
 That triumph the stranger shall know!
 May this right hand be withered forever,
 Ere it string our high harp for the foe!

On the willow that harp is suspended,
 O Salem! its sound should be free;
 And the hour when thy glories were ended
 But left me that token of thee:
 And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended
 With the voice of the spoiler by me!

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
 And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
 And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
 When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
 That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
 Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
 That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
 And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;

And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride:
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmeared by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

A SPIRIT PASSED BEFORE ME

FROM JOB

A SPIRIT passed before me: I beheld
The face of immortality unveiled—
Deep sleep came down on every eye save mine—
And there it stood—all formless—but divine:
Along my bones the creeping flesh did quake;
And as my damp hair stiffened, thus it spake:

“Is man more just than God? Is man more pure
Than He who deems even Seraphs insecure?
Creatures of clay—vain dwellers in the dust!
The moth survives you, and are ye more just?
Things of a day! you wither ere the night,
Heedless and blind to Wisdom’s wasted light!”

DOMESTIC PIECES

FARE THEE WELL

"Alas! they had been friends in youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth;
And constancy lives in realms above;
And life is thorny, and youth is vain:
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain;

.
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs, which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between,
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been."

COLERIDGE'S "CHRISTABEL."

FARE thee well! and if forever,
Still forever, fare thee well:
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

Would that breast were bared before thee,
Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
Which thou ne'er canst know again:

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
Every inmost thought could show!
Then thou wouldst at last discover
'Twas not well to spurn it so.

Though the world for this commend thee—
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe:

Though my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found,
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound?

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not:
Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away:

Still thine own its life retaineth—
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat;
And the undying thought which paineth
Is—that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow
Than the wail above the dead;
Both shall live, but every morrow
Wake us from a widowed bed.

And when thou wouldst solace gather,
When our child's first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say "Father!"
Though his care she must forego?

When her little hands shall press thee,
When her lip to thine is pressed,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,
Think of him thy love had blessed!

Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou never more mayst see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know;
All my hopes where'er thou goest,
Wither, yet with thee they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken;
Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee—by thee forsaken,
Even my soul forsakes me now:

But 'tis done—all words are idle—
 Words from me are vainer still;
 But the thoughts we can not bridle
 Force their way without the will.

Fare thee well!—thus disunited,
 Torn from every nearer tie,
 Seared in heart, and lone, and blighted,
 More than this I scarce can die.

March 17, 1816.

A SKETCH

“Honest—honest Iago!
 If that thou be'st a devil, I can not kill thee.”
 SHAKESPEARE.

BORN in the garret, in the kitchen bred,
 Promoted thence to deck her mistress' head;
 Next—for some gracious service unexpressed,
 And from its wages only to be guessed—
 Raised from the toilette to the table—where
 Her wondering betters wait behind her chair.
 With eye unmoved, and forehead unabashed,
 She dines from off the plate she lately washed.
 Quick with the tale, and ready with the lie—
 The genial confidante, and general spy—
 Who could, ye gods! her next employment guess—
 An only infant's earliest governess!
 She taught the child to read, and taught so well,
 That she herself, by teaching, learned to spell.
 An adept next in penmanship she grows,
 As many a nameless slander deftly shows:
 What she had made the pupil of her art,
 None know—but that high Soul secured the heart,
 And panted for the truth it could not hear,
 With longing breast and undeluded ear.
 Foiled was perversion by that youthful mind,
 Which Flattery fooled not—Baseness could not blind,
 Deceit infect not—near Contagion soil—
 Indulgence weaken—nor Example spoil—
 Nor mastered Science tempt her to look down
 On humbler talents with a pitying frown—
 Nor Genius swell—nor Beauty render vain—
 Nor Envy ruffle to retaliate pain—
 Nor Fortune change—Pride raise—nor Passion bow,
 Nor Virtue teach austerity—till now.

Serenely purest of her sex that live,
But wanting one sweet weakness—to forgive,
Too shocked at faults her soul can never know,
She deems that all could be like her below :
Foe to all vice, yet hardly Virtue's friend,
For Virtue pardons those she would amend.

But to the theme :—now laid aside too long,
The baleful burthen of this honest song—
Though all her former functions are no more,
She rules the circle which she served before.
If mothers—none knew why—before her quake ;
If daughters dread her for the mothers' sake ;
If early habits—those false links which bind
At times the loftiest to the meanest mind—
Have given her power too deeply to instil
The angry essence of her deadly will ;
If like a snake she steal within your walls,
Till the black slime betray her as she crawls ;
If like a viper to the heart she wind,
And leave the venom there she did not find ;
What marvel that this hag of hatred works
Eternal evil latent as she lurks,
To make a Pandemonium where she dwells,
And reign the Hecate of domestic hells ?
Skilled by a touch to deepen scandal's tints
With all the kind mendacity of hints,
While mingling truth with falsehood—sneers with smiles—
A thread of candour with a web of wiles ;
A plain blunt show of briefly-spoken seeming,
To hide her bloodless heart's soul-hardened scheming ;
A lip of lies—a face formed to conceal ;
And, without feeling, mock at all who feel :
With a vile mask the Gorgon would disown ;
A cheek of parchment—and an eye of stone.
Mark, how the channels of her yellow blood
Ooze to her skin, and stagnate there to mud,
Cased like the centipede in saffron mail,
Or darker greenness of the scorpion's scale—
(For drawn from reptiles only may we trace
Congenial colours in that soul or face)—
Look on her features ! and behold her mind
As in a mirror of itself defined :
Look on the picture ! deem it not o'ercharged—
There is no trait which might not be enlarged :
Yet true to "Nature's journeymen," who made
This monster when their mistress left off trade—

This female dog-star of her little sky,
Where all beneath her influence droop or die.

Oh! wretch without a tear—without a thought,
Save joy above the ruin thou hast wrought—
The time shall come, nor long remote, when thou
Shalt feel far more than thou inflictest now;
Feel for thy vile self-loving self in vain,
And turn thee howling in unpitied pain.
May the strong curse of crushed affections light
Back on thy bosom with reflected blight!
And make thee in thy leprosy of mind
As loathsome to thyself as to mankind!
Till all thy self-thoughts curdle into hate,
Black—as thy will for others would create:
Till thy hard heart be calcined into dust,
And thy soul welter in its hideous crust.
Oh, may thy grave be sleepless as the bed—
The widowed couch of fire, that thou hast spread!
Then, when thou fain wouldst weary Heaven with prayer,
Look on thine earthly victims—and despair!
Down to the dust!—and, as thou rott'st away,
Even worms shall perish on thy poisonous clay.
But for the love I bore, and still must bear,
To her thy malice from all ties would tear—
Thy name—thy human name—to every eye
The climax of all scorn should hang on high,
Exalted o'er thy less abhorred compeers—
And festering in the infamy of years.

March 29, 1816.

STANZAS TO AUGUSTA

WHEN all around grew drear and dark,
And Reason half withheld her ray—
And hope but shed a dying spark
Which more misled my lonely way;

In that deep midnight of the mind,
And that internal strife of heart,
When dreading to be deemed too kind,
The weak despair—the cold depart;

When fortune changed—and love fled far,
And hatred's shafts flew thick and fast,
Thou wert the solitary star
Which rose, and set not to the last.

Oh! blest be thine unbroken light!

That watched me as a seraph's eye,
And stood between me and the night,
Forever shining sweetly nigh.

And when the cloud upon us came,
Which strove to blacken o'er thy ray—
Then purer spread its gentle flame,
And dashed the darkness all away.

Still may thy spirit dwell on mine,
And teach it what to brave or brook—
There's more in one soft word of thine
Than in the world's defied rebuke.

Thou stood'st, as stands a lovely tree,
That still unbroke, though gently bent,
Still waves with fond fidelity
Its boughs above a monument.

The winds might rend—the skies might pour,
But there thou wert—and still wouldst be
Devoted in the stormiest hour
To shed thy weeping leaves o'er me.

But thou and thine shall know no blight,
Whatever fate on me may fall;
For Heaven in sunshine will requite
The kind—and thee the most of all.

Then let the ties of baffled love
Be broken—thine will never break;
Thy heart can feel—but will not move;
Thy soul, though soft, will never shake.

And these, when all was lost beside,
Were found, and still are fixed in thee;—
And bearing still a breast so tried,
Earth is no desert—e'en to me.

STANZAS TO AUGUSTA

THOUGH the day of my destiny's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined,
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find;

Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
It shrunk not to share it with me,
And the love which my spirit hath painted
It never hath found but in thee.

Then when Nature around me is smiling,
The last smile which answers to mine,
I do not believe it beguiling,
Because it reminds me of thine ;
And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,
If their billows excite an emotion,
It is that they bear me from thee.

Though the rock of my last hope is shivered,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is delivered
To pain—it shall not be its slave.
There is many a pang to pursue me :
They may crush, but they shall not contemn—
They may torture, but shall not subdue me—
'Tis of thee that I think—not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slandered, thou never couldst shake—
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,
Nor, mute, that the world might belie.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,
Nor the war of the many with one—
If my soul was not fitted to prize it,
'Twas folly not sooner to shun :
And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more that I once could foresee,
I have found that, whatever it lost me,
It could not deprive me of thee.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perished,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that what I most cherished
Deserved to be dearest of all :

In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of thee.

July 24, 1816.

EPISTLE TO AUGUSTA

My sister ! my sweet sister ! if a name
Dearer and purer were, it should be thine.
Mountains and seas divide us, but I claim
No tears, but tenderness to answer mine :
Go where I will, to me thou art the same—
A loved regret which I would not resign.
There yet are two things in my destiny—
A world to roam through, and a home with thee.

The first were nothing—had I still the last,
It were the haven of my happiness ;
But other claims and other ties thou hast,
And mine is not the wish to make them less.
A strange doom is thy father's son's, and past
Recalling, as it lies beyond redress ;
Reversed for him our grandsire's fate of yore—
He had no rest at sea, nor I on shore.

If my inheritance of storms hath been
In other elements, and on the rocks
Of perils, overlooked or unforeseen,
I have sustained my share of worldly shocks,
The fault was mine ; nor do I seek to screen
My errors with defensive paradox ;
I have been cunning in mine overthrow,
The careful pilot of my proper woe.

Mine were my faults, and mine be their reward,
My whole life was a contest, since the day
That gave me being, gave me that which marred
The gift—a fate, or will, that walked astray ;
And I at times have found the struggle hard,
And thought of shaking off my bonds of clay :
But now I fain would for a time survive,
If but to see what next can well arrive.

Kingdoms and empires in my little day
 I have outlived, and yet I am not old;
 And when I look on this, the petty spray
 Of my own years of trouble, which have rolled
 Like a wild bay of breakers, melts away:
 Something—I know not what—does still uphold
 A spirit of slight patience;—not in vain,
 Even for its own sake, do we purchase pain.

Perhaps the workings of defiance stir
 Within me—or perhaps a cold despair,
 Brought on when ills habitually recur—
 Perhaps a kinder clime, or purer air,
 (For even to this may change of soul refer,
 And with light armour we may learn to bear)
 Have taught me a strange quiet, which was not
 The chief companion of a calmer lot.

I feel almost at times as I have felt
 In happy childhood; trees, and flowers, and brooks,
 Which do remember me of where I dwelt,
 Ere my young mind was sacrificed to books,
 Come as of yore upon me, and can melt
 My heart with recognition of their looks;
 And even at moments I could think I see
 Some living thing to love—but none like thee.

Here are the Alpine landscapes which create
 A fund for contemplation;—to admire
 Is a brief feeling of a trivial date;
 But something worthier do such scenes inspire.
 Here to be lonely is not desolate,
 For much I view which I could most desire,
 And, above all, a lake I can behold
 Lovelier, not dearer, than our own of old.

Oh, that thou wert but with me!—but I grow
 The fool of my own wishes, and forget
 The solitude which I have vaunted so
 Has lost its praise in this but one regret;
 There may be others which I less may show;—
 I am not of the plaintive mood, and yet
 I feel an ebb in my philosophy,
 And the tide rising in my altered eye.

I did remind thee of our own dear Lake,
 By the old Hall which may be mine no more.

Kingdoms and empires
 I have outlived, and yet I have not died;
 And when I look on those who have been called
 By my own spirit, and who have been called
 To take a wild life of the world, and to
 Some win, and some are lost, and some are
 A spirit of light and truth is there,
 Even for the poor and lowly, and for the lowly.

For the first workings of the spirit
 It is the first of the spirit, and the first
 And when I look on those who have been called
 By my own spirit, and who have been called
 To take a wild life of the world, and to
 Some win, and some are lost, and some are
 A spirit of light and truth is there,
 Even for the poor and lowly, and for the lowly.

I feel almost as if I were a child
 In a happy childhood, and I feel as if I were
 Which do remind me of the first of the spirit
 Ere my young mind was, and I feel as if I were
 Come as of yore upon me, and I feel as if I were
 My heart with recognition, and I feel as if I were
 And even, at moments I could find I was
 Some living thing to love—but none like to be

Here are the Alpine landscapes, which are to
 A field for contemplation, and a field
 For the feeling of a trivial day
 For something worthier to such a field
 For the feeling of a trivial day
 For something worthier to such a field
 For the feeling of a trivial day
 For something worthier to such a field

For the feeling of a trivial day
 For something worthier to such a field
 For the feeling of a trivial day
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 For the feeling of a trivial day
 For something worthier to such a field
 For the feeling of a trivial day
 For something worthier to such a field

I will remind thee of our own dear home
 By the old Hall which may be found in the





Leman's is fair ; but think not I forsake
The sweet remembrance of a dearer shore :
Sad havoc Time must with my memory make,
Ere that or thou can fade these eyes before ;
Though, like all things which I have loved, they are
Resigned forever, or divided far.

The world is all before me ; I but ask
Of Nature that with which she will comply—
It is but in her summer's sun to bask,
To mingle with the quiet of her sky,
To see her gentle face without a mask,
And never gaze on it with apathy.
She was my early friend, and now she'll be
My sister—till I look again on thee.

I can reduce all feelings but this one ;
And that I would not ;—for at length I see
Such scenes as those wherein my life begun.
The earliest—even the only paths for me—
Had I but sooner learned the crowd to shun,
I had been better than I now can be ;
The passions which have torn me would have slept ;
I had not suffered, and thou hadst not wept.

With false Ambition what had I to do ?
Little with Love, and least of all with Fame ;
And yet they came unsought, and with me grew,
And made me all which they can make—a name.
Yet this was not the end I did pursue ;
Surely I once beheld a nobler aim.
But all is over—I am one the more
To baffled millions which have gone before.

And for the future, this world's future may
From me demand but little of my care ;
I have outlived myself by many a day ;
Having survived so many things that were ;
My years have been no slumber, but the prey
Of ceaseless vigils ; for I had the share
Of life which might have filled a century,
Before its fourth in time had passed me by.

And for the remnant which may be to come,
I am content ; and for the past I feel
Not thankless—for within the crowded sum
Of struggles, happiness at times would steal,

And for the present, I would not benumb
 My feelings farther.—Nor shall I conceal
 That with all this I still can look around,
 And worship Nature with a thought profound.

For thee, my own sweet sister, in thy heart
 I know myself secure, as thou in mine;
 We were and are—I am, even as thou art—
 Beings who ne'er each other can resign;
 It is the same, together or apart,
 From life's commencement to its slow decline
 We are entwined—let death come slow or fast,
 The tie which bound the first, endures the last!

LINES

ON HEARING THAT LADY BYRON WAS ILL

AND thou wert sad—yet I was not with thee!
 And thou wert sick, and yet I was not near;
 Methought that joy and health alone could be
 Where I was not—and pain and sorrow here.
 And is it thus?—it is as I foretold,
 And shall be more so; for the mind recoils
 Upon itself, and the wrecked heart lies cold,
 While heaviness collects the shattered spoils.
 It is not in the storm nor in the strife
 We feel benumbed, and wish to be no more,
 But in the after-silence on the shore
 When all is lost, except a little life.

I am too well avenged!—but 'twas my right;
 Whate'er my sins might be, thou wert not sent
 To be the Nemesis who should requite—
 Nor did Heaven choose so near an instrument.
 Mercy is for the merciful!—if thou
 Hast been of such, 'twill be accorded now.
 Thy nights are banished from the realms of sleep!—
 Yes! they may flatter thee, but thou shalt feel
 A hollow agony which will not heal.
 For thou art pillowed on a curse too deep;
 Thou hast sown in my sorrow, and must reap
 The bitter harvest in a woe as real!
 I have had many foes, but none like thee;

For 'gainst the rest myself I could defend,
And be avenged, or turn them into friend;
But thou in safe implacability
Hadst naught to dread—in thy own weakness shielded,
And in my love, which hath but too much yielded,
And spared, for thy sake, some I should not spare—
And thus upon the world—trust in thy truth—
And the wild fame of my ungoverned youth—
On things that were not, and on things that are—
Even upon such a basis hast thou built
A monument, whose cement hath been guilt!
The moral Clytemnestra of thy lord,
And hewed down, with an unsuspected sword,
Fame, peace, and hope—and all the better life
Which, but for this cold treason of thy heart,
Might still have risen from out the grave of strife,
And found a nobler duty than to part.
But of thy virtues didst thou make a vice,
Trafficking with them in a purpose cold,
For present anger, and for future gold—
And buying other's grief at any price.
And thus once entered into crooked ways,
The early truth, which was thy proper praise,
Did not still walk beside thee—but at times,
And with a breast unknowing its own crimes,
Deceit, averments incompatible,
Equivocations, and the thoughts which dwell
In Janus-spirits—the significant eye
Which learns to lie with silence—the pretext
Of Prudence, with advantages annexed—
The acquiescence in all things which tend,
No matter how, to the desired end—
All found a place in thy philosophy.
The means were worthy, and the end is won—
I would not do by thee as thou hast done!

September, 1816.

WELL! THOU ART HAPPY

WELL! thou art happy, and I feel
That I should thus be happy too;
For still my heart regards thy weal
Warmly, as it was wont to do.

Thy husband's blest—and 'twill impart
Some pangs to view his happier lot :
But let them pass—Oh ! how my heart
Would hate him if he loved thee not !

When late I saw thy favourite child,
I thought my jealous heart would break ;
But when the unconscious infant smiled,
I kissed it for its mother's sake.

I kissed it—and repressed my sighs,
Its father in its face to see ;
But then it had its mother's eyes,
And they were all to love and me.

Mary, adieu ! I must away :
While thou art blest I'll not repine ;
But near thee I can never stay ;
My heart would soon again be thine.

I deemed that time, I deemed that pride
Had quenched at length my boyish flame ;
Nor knew, till seated by thy side,
My heart in all—save hope—the same.

Yet was I calm : I knew the time
My breast would thrill before thy look ;
But now to tremble were a crime—
We met—and not a nerve was shook.

I saw thee gaze upon my face,
Yet meet with no confusion there ;
One only feeling couldst thou trace—
The sullen calmness of despair.

Away ! away ! my early dream
Remembrance never must awake :
Oh ! where is Lethe's fabled stream ?
My foolish heart, be still, or break.

November 2, 1808.

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

THE ADIEU

WRITTEN UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT THE
AUTHOR WOULD SOON DIE

ADIEU, thou Hill! where early joy
Spread roses o'er my brow;
Where Science seeks each loitering boy
With knowledge to endow.
Adieu, my youthful friends or foes,
Partners of former bliss or woes;
No more through Ida's paths we stray;
Soon must I share the gloomy cell,
Whose ever-slumbering inmates dwell
Unconscious of the day.

Adieu, ye hoary Regal Fanes,
Ye spires of Granta's vale,
Where Learning robed in sable reigns,
And Melancholy pale.
Ye comrades of the jovial hour,
Ye tenants of the classic bower,
On Cama's verdant margin placed,
Adieu! while memory still is mine,
For, offerings on Oblivion's shrine,
These scenes must be effaced.

Adieu, ye mountains of the clime
Where grew my youthful years;
Where Loch na Garr in snows sublime
His giant summit rears.
Why did my childhood wander forth
From you, the regions of the North,

With sons of pride to roam?
Why did I quit my Highland cave,
Marr's dusky heath, and Dee's clear wave,
To seek a Sotheron home?

Hall of my Sires! a long farewell—
Yet why to thee adieu?
Thy vaults will echo back my knell,
Thy towers my tomb will view:
The faltering tongue which sung thy fall,
And former glories of thy Hall,
Forgets its wonted simple note—
But yet the Lyre retains the strings,
And sometimes, on Æolian wings,
In dying strains may float.

Fields which surround yon rustic cot,
While yet I linger here,
Adieu! you are not now forgot,
To retrospection dear.
Streamlet! along whose rippling surge,
My youthful limbs were wont to urge
At noontide heat their pliant course;
Plunging with ardour from the shore,
Thy springs will lave these limbs no more,
Deprived of active force.

And shall I here forget the scene,
Still nearest to my breast?
Rocks rise and rivers roll between
The spot which passion blest;
Yet, Mary, all thy beauties seem
Fresh as in Love's bewitching dream,
To me in smiles displayed;
Till slow disease resigns his prey
To Death, the parent of decay,
Thine image can not fade.

And thou, my Friend! whose gentle love
Yet thrills my bosom's chords,
How much thy friendship was above
Description's power of words!
Still near my breast thy gift I wear
Which sparkled once with Feeling's tear,
Of Love the pure, the sacred gem;
Our souls were equal, and our lot
In that dear moment quite forgot;
Let Pride alone condemn!

All, all is dark and cheerless now !
No smile of Love's deceit
Can warm my veins with wonted glow,
Can bid Life's pulses beat :
Not e'en the hope of future fame
Can wake my faint, exhausted frame,
Or crown with fancied wreaths my head.
Mine is a short, inglorious race—
To humble in the dust my face,
And mingle with the dead.

O Fame ! thou goddess of my heart ;
On him who gains thy praise,
Pointless must fall the Spectre's dart,
Consumed in Glory's blaze ;
But me she beckons from the earth,
My name obscure, unmarked my birth,
My life a short and vulgar dream :
Lost in the dull, ignoble crowd,
My hopes recline within a shroud,
My fate is Lethe's stream.

When I repose beneath the sod,
Unheeded in the clay,
Where once my playful footsteps trod,
Where now my head must lay,
The meed of Pity will be shed
In dew-drops o'er my narrow bed,
By nightly skies, and storms alone ;
No mortal eye will deign to steep
With tears the dark sepulchral deep
Which hides a name unknown.

Forget this world, my restless sprite,
Turn, turn thy thoughts to Heaven :
There must thou soon direct thy flight,
If errors are forgiven.
To bigots and to sects unknown,
Bow down beneath the Almighty's Throne ;
To Him address thy trembling prayer :
He, who is merciful and just,
Will not reject a child of dust,
Although his meanest care.

Father of Light ! to Thee I call ;
My soul is dark within :
Thou who canst mark the sparrow's fall,
Avert the death of sin.

Thou, who canst guide the wandering star,
Who calm'st the elemental war,
Whose mantle is yon boundless sky,
My thoughts, my words, my crimes forgive :
And, since I soon must cease to live,
Instruct me how to die.

TO A VAIN LADY

Al, heedless girl ! why thus disclose
What ne'er was meant for other ears ;
Why thus destroy thine own repose
And dig the source of future tears ?

Oh, thou wilt weep, imprudent maid,
While lurking envious foes will smile,
For all the follies thou hast said
Of those who spoke but to beguile.

Vain girl ! thy lingering woes are nigh,
If thou believ'st what striplings say :
Oh, from the deep temptation fly,
Nor fall the specious spoiler's prey.

Dost thou repeat, in childish boast,
The words man utters to deceive ?
Thy peace, thy hope, thy all is lost,
If thou canst venture to believe.

While now among thy female peers
Thou tell'st again the soothing tale,
Canst thou not mark the rising sneers
Duplicity in vain would veil ?

These tales in secret silence hush,
Nor make thyself the public gaze :
What modest maid without a blush
Recounts a flattering coxcomb's praise ?

Will not the laughing boy despise
Her who relates each fond conceit—
Who, thinking Heaven is in her eyes,
Yet can not see the slight deceit ?

For she who takes a soft delight
These amorous nothings in revealing,
Must credit all we say or write,
While vanity prevents concealing.

Cease, if you prize your beauty's reign!
No jealousy bids me reprove:
One, who is thus from nature vain,
I pity, but I can not love.

ON FINDING A FAN

IN one who felt as once he felt,
This might, perhaps, have fanned the flame;
But now his heart no more will melt,
Because that heart is not the same.

As when the ebbing flames are low,
The aid which once improved their light,
And bade them burn with fiercer glow,
Now quenches all their blaze in night.

Thus has it been with passion's fires—
As many a boy and girl remembers—
While every hope of love expires,
Extinguished with the dying embers.

The first, though not a spark survive,
Some careful hand may teach to burn;
The last, alas! can ne'er survive;
No touch can bid its warmth return.

Or, if it chance to wake again,
Not always doomed its heat to smother,
It sheds (so wayward fates ordain)
Its former warmth around another.

FAREWELL! IF EVER FONDEST PRAYER

FAREWELL! if ever fondest prayer
For other's weal availed on high,
Mine will not all be lost in air,
But waft thy name beyond the sky.

'Twere vain to speak, to weep, to sigh :
 Oh ! more than tears of blood can tell,
 When wrung from guilt's expiring eye,
 Are in that word—Farewell !—Farewell !

These lips are mute, these eyes are dry ;
 But in my breast and in my brain,
 Awake the pangs that pass not by,
 The thought that ne'er shall sleep again.
 My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,
 Though grief and passion there rebel ;
 I only know we loved in vain—
 I only feel—Farewell !—Farewell !

BRIGHT BE THE PLACE OF THY SOUL

BRIGHT be the place of thy soul !
 No lovelier spirit than thine
 E'er burst from its mortal control
 In the orbs of the blessed to shine.

On earth thou wert all but divine,
 As thy soul shall immortally be ;
 And our sorrow may cease to repine,
 When we know that thy God is with thee.

Light be the turf of thy tomb !
 May its verdure like emeralds be ;
 There should not be the shadow of gloom
 In aught that reminds us of thee.

Young flowers and an evergreen tree
 May spring from the spot of thy rest :
 But nor cypress nor yew let us see ;
 For why should we mourn for the blest ?

WHEN WE TWO PARTED

WHEN we two parted
 In silence and tears,
 Half broken-hearted
 To sever for years,

Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow—
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame;
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well:—
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met—
In silence I grieve,
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee?—
With silence and tears.

TO A YOUTHFUL FRIEND

Few years have passed since thou and I
Were firmest friends, at least in name,
And childhood's gay sincerity
Preserved our feelings long the same.

But now, like me, too well thou know'st
What trifles oft the heart recall;
And those who once have loved the most
Too soon forget they loved at all.

And such the change the heart displays,
So frail is early friendship's reign,
A month's brief lapse, perhaps a day's,
Will view thy mind estranged again.

If so, it never shall be mine
To mourn the loss of such a heart ;
The fault was Nature's fault, not thine,
Which made thee fickle as thou art.

As rolls the ocean's changing tide,
So human feelings ebb and flow ;
And who would in a breast confide
Where stormy passions ever glow ?

It boots not that, together bred,
Our childish days were days of joy :
My spring of life has quickly fled ;
Thou, too, hast ceased to be a boy.

And when we bid adieu to youth,
Slaves to the specious world's control,
We sigh a long farewell to truth ;
That world corrupts the noblest soul

Ah, joyous season ! when the mind
Dares all things boldly but to lie ;
When thought ere spoke is unconfined,
And sparkles in the placid eye.

Not so in man's maturer years,
When man himself is but a tool ;
When interest sways our hopes and fears,
And all must love and hate by rule.

With fools in kindred vice the same,
We learn at length our faults to blend ;
And those, and those alone, may claim
The prostituted name of friend.

Such is the common lot of man :
Can we then 'scape from folly free ?
Can we reverse the general plan,
Nor be what all in turn must be ?

No ; for myself, so dark my fate
Through every turn of life hath been ;
Man and the world so much I hate,
I care not when I quit the scene.

But thou, with spirit frail and light,
Wilt shine awhile and pass away;
As glow-worms sparkle through the night,
But dare not stand the test of day.

Alas! whenever folly calls
Where parasites and princes meet
(For cherished first in royal halls,
The welcome vices kindly greet),

Ev'n now thou'rt nightly seen to add
One insect to the fluttering crowd;
And still thy trifling heart is glad
To join the vain, and court the proud.

There dost thou glide from fair to fair,
Still simpering on with eager haste,
As flies along the gay parterre,
That taint the flowers they scarcely taste.

But say, what nymph will prize the flame
Which seems, as marshy vapours move,
To flit along from dame to dame,
An ignis-fatuus gleam of love?

What friend for thee, howe'er inclined,
Will deign to own a kindred care?
Who will debase his manly mind,
For friendship every fool may share?

In time forbear; amidst the throng
No more so base a thing be seen;
No more so idly pass along:
Be something, anything, but—mean.

LINES INSCRIBED UPON A CUP FORMED
FROM A SKULL

START not—nor deem my spirit fled:
In me behold the only skull,
From which, unlike a living head,
Whatever flows is never dull.

I lived, I loved, I quaffed like thee:
I died: let earth my bones resign;
Fill up—thou canst not injure me;
The worm hath fouler lips than thine.

Better to hold the sparkling grape,
 Than nurse the earth-worm's slimy brood :
 And circle in the goblet's shape
 The drink of gods, than reptile's food.

Where once my wit, perchance, hath shone,
 In aid of others' let me shine ;
 And when, alas ! our brains are gone,
 What nobler substitute than wine ?

Quaff while thou canst : another race,
 When thou and thine, like me, are sped,
 May rescue thee from earth's embrace,
 And rhyme and revel with the dead.

Why not ? since through life's little day
 Our heads such sad effects produce ;
 Redeemed from worms and wasting clay,
 This chance is theirs, to be of use.

TRANSLATION OF THE ROMAIC SONG

“ Μπενω μες ’τσ’ περίβόλι’
 ’Ωραύτατη Χάιδή,” etc.

I ENTER thy garden of roses,
 Beloved and fair Haidée,
 Each morning where Flora reposes,
 For surely I see her in thee.
 Oh, Lovely ! thus low I implore thee,
 Receive this fond truth from my tongue,
 Which utters its song to adore thee,
 Yet trembles for what it has sung ;
 As the branch, at the bidding of Nature,
 Adds fragrance and fruit to the tree,
 Through her eyes, through her every feature,
 Shines the soul of the young Haidée.

But the loveliest garden grows hateful
 When love has abandoned the bowers ;
 Bring me hemlock—since mine is ungrateful,
 That herb is more fragrant than flowers.
 The poison, when poured from the chalice,
 Will deeply embitter the bowl ;
 But when drunk to escape from thy malice,
 The draught shall be sweet to my soul.

Too cruel ! in vain I implore thee
My heart from these horrors to save :
Will naught to my bosom restore thee ?
Then open the gates of the grave.

As the chief who to combat advances
Secure of his conquest before,
Thus thou, with those eyes for thy lances,
Hast pierced through my heart to its core.
Ah, tell me, my soul, must I perish
By pangs which a smile would dispel ?
Would the hope, which thou once bad'st me cherish,
For torture repay me too well ?
Now sad is the garden of roses,
Beloved but false Haidée !
There Flora all withered reposes,
And mourns o'er thine absence with me.

INSCRIPTION ON THE MONUMENT OF A NEWFOUNDLAND DOG

WHEN some proud son of man returns to earth,
Unknown to glory but upheld by birth,
The sculptor's art exhausts the pomp of woe,
And storied urns record who rest below ;
When all is done, upon the tomb is seen,
Not what he was, but what he should have been :
But the poor dog, in life the firmest friend,
The first to welcome, foremost to defend,
Whose honest heart is still his master's own,
Who labours, fights, lives, breathes for him alone,
Unhonoured falls, unnoticed all his worth,
Denied in heaven the soul he held on earth :
While man, vain insect ! hopes to be forgiven,
And claims himself a sole exclusive heaven.
Oh man ! thou feeble tenant of an hour,
Debased by slavery or corrupt by power,
Who knows thee well must quit thee with disgust,
Degraded mass of animated dust !
Thy love is lust, thy friendship all a cheat,
Thy smiles hypocrisy, thy words deceit !
By nature vile, ennobled but by name,
Each kindred brute might bid thee blush for shame.

Ye! who perchance behold the simple urn,
Pass on—it honours none you wish to mourn :
To mark a friend's remains these stones arise;
I never knew but one—and here he lies.

REMIND ME NOT

REMIND me not, remind me not,
Of those beloved, those vanished hours,
When all my soul was given to thee;
Hours that may never be forgot,
Till time unnerves our vital powers,
And thou and I shall cease to be.

Can I forget—canst thou forget,
When playing with thy golden hair,
How quick thy fluttering heart did move?
Oh! by my soul, I see thee yet,
With eyes so languid, breast so fair,
And lips, though silent, breathing love.

When thus reclining on my breast,
Those eyes threw back a glance so sweet,
As half reproached, yet raised desire,
And still we near and nearer prest,
And still our glowing lips would meet,
As if in kisses to expire.

And then those pensive eyes would close,
And bid their lids each other seek,
Veiling the azure orbs below;
While their long lashes' darkened gloss
Seemed stealing o'er thy brilliant cheek,
Like raven's plumage smoothed on snow.

I dreamt last night our love returned,
And, sooth to say, that very dream
Was sweeter in its phantasy,
Than if for other hearts I burned,
For eyes that ne'er like thine could beam
In rapture's wild reality.

Then tell me not, remind me not,
Of hours which, though forever gone,
Can still a pleasing dream restore,

Till thou and I shall be forgot,
And senseless as the mouldering stone
Which tells that we shall be no more.

THERE WAS A TIME, I NEED NOT NAME

THERE was a time, I need not name,
Since it will ne'er forgotten be,
When all our feelings were the same
As still my soul hath been to thee.

And from that hour, when first thy tongue
Confessed a love which equalled mine,
Though many a grief my heart hath wrung,
Unknown, and thus unfelt by thine,

None, none hath sunk so deep as this—
To think how all that love hath flown ;
Transient as every faithless kiss,
But transient in thy breast alone.

And yet my heart some solace knew,
When late I heard thy lips declare,
In accents once imagined true,
Remembrance of the days that were.

Yes! my adored, but most unkind!
Though thou wilt never love again,
To me 'tis doubly sweet to find
Remembrance of that love remain.

Yes! 'tis a glorious thought to me,
Nor longer shall my soul repine,
Whate'er thou art, or e'er shalt be,
Thou hast been dearly, solely mine.

AND WILT THOU WEEP WHEN I AM LOW

AND wilt thou weep when I am low?
Sweet lady! speak those words again:
Yet if they grieve thee, say not so—
I would not give that bosom pain.

My heart is sad, my hopes are gone,
 My blood runs coldly through my breast;
 And when I perish, thou alone
 Wilt sigh above my place of rest.

And yet, methinks, a gleam of peace
 Doth through my cloud of anguish shine;
 And for a while my sorrows cease,
 To know thy heart hath felt for mine.

O lady! blessed be that tear—
 It falls for one who can not weep;
 Such precious drops are doubly dear
 To those whose eyes no tear may steep.

Sweet lady! once my heart was warm
 With every feeling soft as thine;
 But beauty's self hath ceased to charm
 A wretch created to repine.

Yet wilt thou weep when I am low?
 Sweet lady! speak those words again;
 Yet if they grieve thee, say not so—
 I would not give that bosom pain.

SONG—FILL THE GOBLET AGAIN

FILL the goblet again! for I never before
 Felt the glow which now gladdens my heart to its core;
 Let us drink!—who would not?—since, through life's varied
 round
 In the goblet alone no deception is found.

I have tried in its turn all that life can supply;
 I have basked in the beam of a dark rolling eye;
 I have loved!—who has not?—but what heart can declare,
 That pleasure existed while passion was there?

In the days of my youth, when the heart's in its spring,
 And dreams that affection can never take wing,
 I had friends!—who has not?—but what tongue will avow,
 That friends, rosy wine! are so faithful as thou?

The heart of a mistress some boy may estrange,
 Friendship shifts with the sunbeam—thou never canst change!

Thou grow'st old!—who does not?—but on earth what appears,
Whose virtues, like thine, still increase with its years?

Yet if blessed to the utmost that love can bestow,
Should a rival bow down to our idol below,
We are jealous!—who's not?—thou hast no such alloy;
For the more that enjoy thee, the more we enjoy.

Then the season of youth and its vanities past,
For refuge we fly to the goblet at last;
There we find—do we not?—in the flow of the soul,
That truth, as of yore, is confined to the bowl.

When the box of Pandora was opened on earth,
And Misery's triumph commenced over Mirth,
Hope was left—was she not?—but the goblet we kiss,
And care not for hope, who are certain of bliss.

Long life to the grape! for when summer has flown,
The age of our nectar shall gladden our own:
We must die—who shall not?—may our sins be forgiven,
And Hebe shall never be idle in heaven.

STANZAS TO A LADY,¹ ON LEAVING ENGLAND

'Tis done—and shivering in the gale
The bark unfurls her snowy sail;
And whistling o'er the bending mast,
Loud sings on high the freshening blast;
And I must from this land be gone,
Because I can not love but one.

But could I be what I have been,
And could I see what I have seen—
Could I repose upon the breast
Which once my warmest wishes blest—
I should not seek another zone,
Because I can not love but one.

'Tis long since I beheld that eye
Which gave me bliss or misery;
And I have striven, but in vain,
Never to think of it again;
For though I fly from Albion,
I still can only love but one.

As some lone bird, without a mate,
My weary heart is desolate ;
I look around, and can not trace
One friendly smile, or welcome face ;
And even in crowds am still alone,
Because I can not love but one.

And I will cross the whitening foam,
And I will seek a foreign home ;
Till I forget a false fair face,
I ne'er shall find a resting-place ;
My own dark thoughts I can not shun,
But ever love, and love but one.

The poorest, veriest wretch on earth
Still finds some hospitable hearth,
Where Friendship's or Love's softer glow
May smile in joy or soothe in woe ;
But friend or leman I have none,
Because I can not love but one.

I go—but wheresoe'er I flee,
There's not an eye will weep for me ;
There's not a kind congenial heart,
Where I can claim the meanest part ;
Nor thou, who hast my hopes undone,
Wilt sigh, although I love but one.

To think of every early scene,
Of what we are, and what we've been,
Would overwhelm some softer hearts with woe—
But mine, alas ! has stood the blow ;
Yet still beats on as it begun,
And never truly loves but one.

And who that dear loved one may be,
Is not for vulgar eyes to see ;
And why that early love was crossed,
Thou know'st the best, I feel the most :
But few that dwell beneath the sun
Have loved so long, and loved but one.

I've tried another's fetters too,
With charms perchance as fair to view ;
And I would fain have loved as well,
But some unconquerable spell
Forbade my bleeding breast to own
A kindred care for aught but one.

'Twould soothe to take one lingering view,
And bless thee in my last adieu;
Yet wish I not those eyes to weep
For him that wanders o'er the deep;
His home, his hope, his youth are gone,
Yet still he loves, and loves but one.

TO FLORENCE

OH, Lady! when I left the shore,
The distant shore which gave me birth,
I hardly thought to grieve once more,
To quit another spot on earth;

Yet here, amidst this barren isle,
Where panting Nature droops the head,
Where only thou art seen to smile,
I view my parting hour with dread.

Though far from Albion's craggy shore,
Divided by the dark blue main;
A few brief rolling seasons o'er,
Perchance I view her cliffs again:

But wheresoe'er I now may roam,
Through scorching clime and varied sea,
Though Time restore me to my home,
I ne'er shall bend mine eyes on thee:

On thee, in whom at once conspire
All charms which heedless hearts can move,
Whom but to see is to admire,
And, oh! forgive the word—to love.

Forgive the word, in one who ne'er
With such a word can more offend;
And since thy heart I can not share,
Believe me what I am, thy friend.

And who so cold as look on thee,
Thou lovely wanderer, and be less?
Nor be what man should ever be,
The friend of Beauty in distress?

Ah! who would think that form had passed
 Through Danger's most destructive path,
 Had braved the death-winged tempest's blast,
 And 'scaped a tyrant's fiercer wrath?

Lady! when I shall view the walls
 Where free Byzantium once arose,
 And Stamboul's Oriental halls
 The Turkish tyrants now inclose;

Though mightiest in the lists of fame
 That glorious city still shall be;
 On me 'twill hold a dearer claim,
 As spot of thy nativity:

And though I bid thee now farewell,
 When I behold that wondrous scene,
 Since where thou art I may not dwell,
 'Twill soothe to be where thou hast been.

WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM, AT MALTA

As o'er the cold sepulchral stone
 Some name arrests the passer-by;
 Thus, when thou view'st this page alone,
 May mine attract thy pensive eye!

And when by thee that name is read,
 Perchance in some succeeding year,
 Reflect on me as on the dead,
 And think my heart is buried here.

STANZAS

COMPOSED DURING A THUNDERSTORM, WHILE BEWILDERED NEAR
 MOUNT PINDUS IN ALBANIA

CHILL and mirk is the nightly blast,
 Where Pindus' mountains rise,
 And angry clouds are pouring fast
 The vengeance of the skies.

Our guides are gone, our hope is lost,
And lightnings, as they play,
But show where rocks our path have crossed,
Or gild the torrent's spray.

Is yon a cot I saw, though low?
When lightning broke the gloom—
How welcome were its shade!—ah, no!
'Tis but a Turkish tomb.

Through sounds of foaming waterfalls,
I hear a voice exclaim—
My way-worn countryman, who calls
On distant England's name.

A shot is fired—by foe or friend?
Another—'tis to tell
The mountain-peasants to descend
And lead us where they dwell.

Oh! who in such a night will dare
To tempt the wilderness?
And who 'mid thunder-peals can hear
Our signal of distress?

And who that heard our shouts would rise
To try the dubious road?
Nor rather deem from nightly cries
That outlaws were abroad?

Clouds burst, skies flash, oh, dreadful hour!
More fiercely pours the storm!
Yet here one thought has still the power
To keep my bosom warm.

While wandering through each broken path,
O'er brake and craggy brow,
While elements exhaust their wrath,
Sweet Florence, where art thou?

Not on the sea, not on the sea,
Thy bark hath long been gone:
Oh, may the storm that pours on me,
Bow down my head alone!

Full swiftly blew the swift Siroc,
When last I pressed thy lip;
And long ere now, with foaming shock,
Impelled thy gallant ship.

Now thou art safe; nay, long ere now
Hast trod the shore of Spain;
'Twere hard if aught so fair as thou
Should linger on the main.

And since I now remember thee
In darkness and in dread,
As in those hours of revelry
Which mirth and music sped;

Do thou, amid the fair white walls,
If Cadiz yet be free,
At times, from out her latticed halls,
Look o'er the dark blue sea;

Then think upon Calypso's isles,
Endeared by days gone by;
To others give a thousand smiles,
To me a single sigh.

And when the admiring circle mark
The paleness of thy face,
A half-formed tear, a transient spark
Of melancholy grace,

Again thou'lt smile, and blushing shun
Some coxcomb's raillery;
Nor own for once thou thought'st on one
Who ever thinks on thee.

Though smile and sigh alike are vain,
When severed hearts repine,
My spirit flies o'er mount and main,
And mourns in search of thine.

STANZAS WRITTEN IN PASSING THE AMBRACIAN
GULF.

THROUGH cloudless skies, in silvery sheen,
Full beams the moon on Actium's coast:
And on these waves, for Egypt's queen,
The ancient world was won and lost.

And now upon the scene I look,
The azure grave of many a Roman;
Where stern Ambition once forsook
His wavering crown to follow woman.

Florence! ² whom I will love as well
As ever yet was said or sung
(Since Orpheus sang his spouse from hell),
Whilst thou art fair and I am young;

Sweet Florence! those were pleasant times,
When worlds were staked for ladies' eyes:
Had bards as many realms as rhymes,
Thy charms might raise new Antonies.

Though Fate forbids such things to be,
Yet, by thine eyes and ringlets curled!
I can not lose a world for thee,
But would not lose thee for a world.

WRITTEN AFTER SWIMMING FROM SESTOS TO
ABYDOS ³

If, in the month of dark December,
Leander, who was nightly wont
(What maid will not the tale remember?)
To cross thy stream, broad Hellespont!

If, when the wintry tempest roared,
He sped to Hero, nothing loath,
And thus of old thy current poured,
Fair Venus! how I pity both!

For me, degenerate modern wretch,
Though in the genial month of May,
My dripping limbs I faintly stretch,
And think I've done a feat to-day.

But since he crossed the rapid tide,
According to the doubtful story,
To woo—and—Lord knows what beside,
And swam for love, as I for glory;

'Twere hard to say who fared the best :
 Sad mortals ! thus the gods still plague you !
 He lost his labour, I my jest ;
 For he was drowned, and I've the ague.

MAID OF ATHENS, ERE WE PART

Ζώη μου, σάς αγαπῶ ⁴

MAID of Athens, ere we part,
 Give, oh give me back my heart !
 Or, since that has left my breast,
 Keep it now, and take the rest !
 Hear my vow before I go,
Ζώη μου, σάς αγαπῶ.

By those tresses unconfined,
 Wooed by each Ægean wind ;
 By those lids whose jetty fringe
 Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge ;
 By those wild eyes like the roe,
Ζώη μου, σάς αγαπῶ.

By that lip I long to taste ;
 By that zone-encircled waist ;
 By all the token-flowers that tell ⁵
 What words can never speak so well ;
 By love's alternate joy and woe,
Ζώη μου, σάς αγαπῶ.

Maid of Athens ! I am gone :
 Think of me, sweet ! when alone.
 Though I fly to Istambol, ⁶
 Athens holds my heart and soul :
 Can I cease to love thee ? No !
Ζώη μου, σάς αγαπῶ.

LINES WRITTEN BENEATH A PICTURE

DEAR object of defeated care !
 Though now of Love and thee bereft,
 To reconcile me with despair,
 Thine image and my tears are left.

"Tis said with Sorrow Time can cope;
 But this I feel can ne'er be true:
 For by the death-blow of my Hope
 My Memory immortal grew.

TRANSLATION OF THE FAMOUS GREEK WAR SONG

"*Δεῦτε παῖδες τῶν Ἑλλήνων.*"[†]

Sons of the Greeks, arise!
 The glorious hour's gone forth,
 And, worthy of such ties,
 Display who gave us birth.

CHORUS

Sons of Greeks! let us go
 In arms against the foe,
 Till their hated blood shall flow
 In a river past our feet.

Then manfully despising
 The Turkish tyrant's yoke,
 Let your country see you rising,
 And all her chains are broke.
 Brave shades of chiefs and sages,
 Behold the coming strife!
 Hellénes of past ages,
 Oh, start again to life!
 At the sound of my trumpet, breaking
 Your sleep, oh, join with me!
 And the seven-hilled city seeking;⁸
 Fight, conquer, till we're free.
 Sons of Greeks, etc.

Sparta, Sparta, why in slumbers
 Lethargic dost thou lie?
 Awake, and join thy numbers
 With Athens, old ally!
 Leonidas recalling,
 That chief of ancient song,
 Who saved ye once from falling,
 The terrible! the strong!

Who made that bold diversion
 In old Thermopylæ,
 And warring with the Persian
 To keep his country free;
 With his three hundred waging
 The battle, long he stood,
 And like a lion raging,
 Expired in seas of blood.
 Sons of Greeks, etc.

ON PARTING

THE kiss, dear maid! thy lip has left
 Shall never part from mine,
 Till happier hours restore the gift
 Untainted back to thine.

Thy parting glance, which fondly beams,
 An equal love may see:
 The tear that from thine eyelid streams
 Can weep no change in me.

I ask no pledge to make me blest
 In gazing when alone;
 Nor one memorial for a breast
 Whose thoughts are all thine own.

Nor need I write—to tell the tale
 My pen were doubly weak;
 Oh! what can idle words avail,
 Unless the heart could speak?

By day or night, in weal or woe,
 That heart, no longer free,
 Must bear the love it can not show,
 And silent ache for thee.

LINES TO A LADY WEeping⁹

WEep, daughter of a royal line,
 A Sire's disgrace, a realm's decay;
 Ah! happy if each tear of thine
 Could wash a father's fault away!

Weep—for thy tears are Virtue's tears—
Auspicious to these suffering isles;
And be each drop in future years
Repaid thee by thy people's smiles!

THE CHAIN I GAVE

FROM THE TURKISH

THE chain I gave was fair to view,
The lute I added sweet in sound;
The heart that offered both was true,
And ill deserved the fate it found.

These gifts were charmed by secret spell,
Thy truth in absence to divine;
And they have done their duty well—
Alas! they could not teach thee thine.

That chain was firm in every link,
But not to bear a stranger's touch;
That lute was sweet—till thou couldst think
In other hands its notes were such.

Let him who from thy neck unbound
The chain which shivered in his grasp,
Who saw that lute refuse to sound,
Restring the chords, renew the clasp.

When thou wert changed, they altered too;
The chain is broke, the music mute.
'Tis past—to them and thee adieu—
False heart, frail chain, and silent lute.

L'AMITIE EST L'AMOUR SANS AILES

WHY should my anxious breast repine,
Because my youth is fled?
Days of delight may still be mine;
Affection is not dead.
In tracing back the years of youth,
One firm record, one lasting truth,

Celestial consolation brings;
 Bear it, ye breezes, to the seat
 Where first my heart responsive beat—
 "Friendship is Love without his wings!"

Through few, but deeply checkered years,
 What moments have been mine!
 Now half obscured by clouds of tears,
 Now bright in rays divine;
 Howe'er my future doom be cast,
 My soul, enraptured with the past,
 To one idea fondly clings;
 Friendship! that thought is all thine own,
 Worth worlds of bliss, that thought alone—
 "Friendship is Love without his wings!"

Where yonder yew-trees lightly wave
 Their branches on the gale,
 Unheeded heaves a simple grave,
 Which tells the common tale;
 Round this unconscious schoolboys stray,
 Till the dull knell of childish play
 From yonder studious mansion rings;
 But here whene'er my footsteps move,
 My silent tears too plainly prove
 "Friendship is Love without his wings!"

Oh, Love, before thy glowing shrine
 My early vows were paid;
 My hopes, my dreams, my heart was thine,
 But these are now decayed;
 For thine are pinions like the wind,
 No trace of thee remains behind,
 Except, alas! thy jealous stings.
 Away, away! delusive power,
 Thou shalt not haunt my coming hour;
 Unless, indeed, without thy wings.

Seat of my youth! thy distant spire
 Recalls each scene of joy;
 My bosom glows with former fire—
 In mind again a boy.
 Thy grove of elms, thy verdant hill,
 Thy very path delights me still,
 Each flower a double fragrance flings;
 Again, as once, in converse gay,
 Each dear associate seems to say,
 "Friendship is Love without his wings!"

My Lycus! wherefore dost thou weep?
 Thy falling tears restrain;
 Affection for a time may sleep,
 But, oh! 'twill wake again.
 Think, think, my friend, when next we meet,
 Our long-wished interview, how sweet!
 From this my hope of rapture springs;
 While youthful hearts thus fondly swell,
 Absence, my friend, can only tell,
 "Friendship is Love without his wings!"

In one, and one alone deceived,
 Did I my error mourn?
 No—from oppressive bonds relieved,
 I left the wretch to scorn.
 I turned to those my childhood knew,
 With feelings warm, with bosoms true,
 Twined with my heart's according strings,
 And till those vital chords shall break,
 For none but these my breast shall wake
 Friendship, the power deprived of wings!

Ye few! my soul, my life is yours,
 My memory and my hope;
 Your worth a lasting love insures,
 Unfettered in its scope;
 From smooth deceit and terror sprung,
 With aspect fair and honeyed tongue,
 Let Adulation wait on kings;
 With joy elate, by snares beset,
 We, we, my friends, can ne'er forget
 "Friendship is Love without his wings!"

Fictions and dreams inspire the bard
 Who rolls the epic song;
 Friendship and truth be my reward—
 To me no bays belong;
 If laurelled Fame but dwells with lies,
 Me the enchantress ever flies,
 Whose heart and not whose fancy sings;
 Simple and young, I dare not feign;
 Mine be the rude yet heartfelt strain,
 "Friendship is Love without his wings!"

ADDRESS, SPOKEN AT THE OPENING OF DRURY-
LANE THEATRE ¹⁰

In one dread night our city saw, and sighed,
Bowed to the dust, the Drama's tower of pride;
In one short hour beheld the blazing fane,
Apollo sink, and Shakespeare cease to reign.

Ye who beheld (oh! sight admired and mourned,
Whose radiance mocked the ruin it adorned!)
Through clouds of fire the massive fragments riven,
Like Israel's pillar, chase the night from heaven;
Saw the long column of revolving flames
Shake its red shadow o'er the startled Thames,
While thousands, thronged around the burning dome,
Shrank back appalled, and trembled for their home,
As glared the volumed blaze, and ghastly shone
The skies, with lightnings awful as their own,
Till blackening ashes and the lonely wall
Usurped the Muse's realm, and marked her fall;
Say—shall this new, nor less aspiring pile,
Reared where once rose the mightiest in our isle,
Know the same favour which the former knew,
A shrine for Shakespeare—worthy him and you?

Yes—it shall be—the magic of that name
Defies the scythe of Time, the torch of Flame;
On the same spot still consecrates the scene,
And bids the Drama be where she hath been:
This fabric's birth attests the potent spell—
Indulge our honest pride, and say, How well!

As soars this fane to emulate the last,
Oh! might we draw our omens from the past,
Some hour propitious to our prayers may boast
Names such as hallow still the dome we lost.
On Drury first your Siddons' thrilling art
O'erwhelmed the gentlest, stormed the sternest heart.
On Drury, Garrick's latest laurels grew;
Here your last tears retiring Roscius drew,
Sighed his last thanks, and wept his last adieu:
But still for living wit the wreaths may bloom,
That only waste their odours o'er the tomb.
Such Drury claimed and claims—nor you refuse
One tribute to revive his slumbering muse;
With garlands deck your own Menander's head,¹¹
Nor hoard your honours idly for the dead!

Dear are the days which made our annals bright,
 Ere Garrick fled, or Brinsley ceased to write,
 Heirs to their labours, like all high-born heirs,
 Vain of our ancestry as they of theirs;
 While thus Remembrance borrows Banquo's glass
 To claim the sceptred shadows as they pass,
 And we the mirror hold, where imaged shine
 Immortal names, emblazoned on our line,
 Pause—ere their feebl' offsprings you condemn,
 Reflect how hard the task to rival them!

Friends of the stage! to whom both Players and Plays
 Must sue alike for pardon or for praise,
 Whose judging voice and eye alone direct
 The boundless power to cherish or reject;
 If e'er frivolity has led to fame,
 And made us blush that you forbore to blame;
 If e'er the sinking stage could condescend
 To soothe the sickly taste it dare not mend,
 All past reproach may present scenes refute,
 And censure, wisely loud, be justly mute!
 Oh! since your fiat stamps the Drama's laws,
 Forbear to mock us with misplaced applause;
 So pride shall doubly nerve the actor's powers,
 And reason's voice be echoed back by ours!

This greeting o'er, the ancient rule obeyed,
 The Drama's homage by her herald paid,
 Receive our welcome too, whose every tone
 Springs from our hearts, and fain would win your own.
 The curtain rises—may our stage unfold
 Scenes not unworthy Drury's days of old!
 Britons our judges, Nature for our guide,
 Still may we please—long, long may you preside.

TO TIME

TIME! on whose arbitrary wing
 The varying hours must flag or fly,
 Whose tardy winter, fleeting spring,
 But drive or drag us on to die—
 Hail thou! who on my birth bestowed
 Those boons to all that know thee known;
 Yet better I sustain thy load,
 For now I bear the weight alone.

I would not one fond heart should share
 The bitter moments thou hast given ;
 And pardon thee, since thou couldst spare
 All that I loved, to peace or heaven.

To them be joy or rest, on me
 Thy future ills shall press in vain :
 I nothing owe but years to thee,
 A debt already paid in pain.

Yet even that pain was some relief,
 It felt, but still forgot thy power :
 The active agony of grief
 Retards, but never counts the hour.

In joy I've sighed to think thy flight
 Would soon subside from swift to slow ;
 Thy cloud could overcast the light,
 But could not add a night to woe ;

For them, however drear and dark,
 My soul was suited to thy sky ;
 One star alone shot forth a spark
 To prove thee—not Eternity.

That beam hath sunk, and now thou art
 A blank ; a thing to count and curse,
 Through each dull tedious trifling part,
 Which all regret, yet all rehearse.

One scene even thou canst not deform ;
 The limit of thy sloth or speed,
 When future wanderers bear the storm
 Which we shall sleep too sound to heed :

And I can smile to think how weak
 Thine efforts shortly shall be shown,
 When all the vengeance thou canst wreak
 Must fall upon—a nameless stone.

TRANSLATION OF A ROMAIC LOVE-SONG

AH ! Love was never yet without
 The pang, the agony, the doubt,
 Which rends my heart with ceaseless sigh,
 While day and night roll darkling by.

Without one friend to hear my woe,
I faint, I die beneath the blow.
That love had arrows well I knew:
Alas! I find them poisoned too.

Birds, yet in freedom, shun the net
Which love around your haunts hath set;
Or circled by his fatal fire,
Your hearts shall burn, your hopes expire.

A bird of free and careless wing
Was I through many a smiling spring;
But caught within the subtle snare,
I burn, and feebly flutter there.

Who ne'er have loved, and loved in vain,
Can neither feel nor pity pain,
The cold repulse, the look askance,
The lightning of Love's angry glance.

In flattering dreams I deemed thee mine;
Now hope, and he who hoped, decline;
Like melting wax, or withering flower,
I feel my passion, and thy power.

My light of life! ah, tell me why
That pouting lip and altered eye?
My bird of love! my beauteous mate!
And art thou changed, and canst thou hate?

Mine eyes like wintry streams o'erflow:
What wretch with me would barter woe?
My bird! relent: one note could give
A charm, to bid thy lover live.

My curdling blood, my maddening brain,
In silent anguish I sustain;
And still thy heart, without partaking
One pang, exults—while mine is breaking.

Pour me the poison; fear not thou!
Thou canst not murder more than now:
I've lived to curse my natal day,
And Love, that thus can lingering slay.

My wounded soul, my bleeding breast,
Can patience preach thee into rest?
Alas! too late, I dearly know
That joy is harbinger of woe.

THOU ART NOT FALSE, BUT THOU ART FICKLE

THOU art not false, but thou art fickle,
 To those thyself so fondly sought;
 The tears that thou hast forced to trickle
 Are doubly bitter from that thought:
 'Tis this which breaks the heart thou grieve'st,
 Too well thou lov'st—too soon thou leavest.

The wholly false the heart despises,
 And spurns deceiver and deceit;
 But she who not a thought disguises,
 Whose love is as sincere as sweet—
 When she can change who loved so truly,
 It feels what mine has felt so newly.

To dream of joy and wake to sorrow
 Is doomed to all who love or live;
 And if, when conscious on the morrow,
 We scarce our fancy can forgive,
 That cheated us in slumber only,
 To leave the waking soul more lonely,

What must they feel whom no false vision,
 But truest, tenderest passion warmed?
 Sincere, but swift in sad transition;
 As if a dream alone had charmed?
 Ah! sure such grief is fancy's scheming,
 And all thy change can be but dreaming!

REMEMBER HIM WHOM PASSION'S POWER

REMEMBER him whom passion's power
 Severely, deeply, vainly proved:
 Remember thou that dangerous hour,
 When neither fell, though both were loved.

That yielding breast, that melting eye,
 Too much invited to be blessed;
 That gentle prayer, that pleading sigh,
 The wilder wish reprov'd, repressed.

Oh! let me feel that all I lost
 But saved thee all that conscience fears;
 And blush for every pang it cost
 To spare the vain remorse of years.

Yet think of this when many a tongue,
Whose busy accents whisper blame,
Would do the heart that loved thee wrong,
And brand a nearly blighted name.

Think that, whate'er to others, thou
Hast seen each selfish thought subdued :
I bless thy purer soul even now,
Even now in midnight solitude.

O God ! that we had met in time,
Our hearts as fond, thy hand more free ;
When thou hadst loved without a crime,
And I been less unworthy thee !

Far may thy days, as heretofore,
From this our gaudy world be past !
And that too bitter moment o'er,
Oh ! may such trial be thy last !

This heart, alas ! perverted long,
Itself destroyed might thee destroy ;
To meet thee in the glittering throng,
Would wake Presumption's hope of joy.

Then to the things whose bliss or woe,
Like mine, is wild and worthless all,
That world resign—such scenes forego,
Where those who feel must surely fall.

Thy youth, thy charms, thy tenderness,
Thy soul from long seclusion pure ;
From what even here hath passed, may guess
What there thy bosom must endure.

Oh ! pardon that imploring tear,
Since not by virtue shed in vain,
My frenzy drew from eyes so dear ;
For me they shall not weep again.

Though long and mournful must it be,
The thought that we no more may meet ;
Yet I deserve the stern decree,
And almost deem the sentence sweet.

Still, had I loved thee less, my heart
Had then less sacrificed to thine ;
It felt not half so much to part
As if its guilt had made thee mine.

IMPROMPTU, IN REPLY TO A FRIEND

WHEN, from the heart where sorrow sits,
 Her dusky shadow mounts too high,
 And o'er the changing aspect flits,
 And clouds the brow, or fills the eye;
 Heed not that gloom, which soon shall sink :
 My thoughts their dungeon know too well ;
 Back to my breast the wanderers shrink,
 And droop within their silent cell.

SONNETS TO GENEVRA

I

THINE eyes' blue tenderness, thy long fair hair,
 And the wan lustre of thy features—caught
 From contemplation—where, serenely wrought,
 Seems Sorrow's softness charmed from its despair—
 Have thrown such speaking sadness in thine air,
 That—but I know thy blessed bosom fraught
 With mines of unalloyed and stainless thought—
 I should have deemed thee doomed to earthly care.
 With such an aspect, by his colours blent,
 When from his beauty-breathing pencil born
 (Except that thou hast nothing to repent),
 The Magdalen of Guido saw the morn—
 Such seem'st thou—but how much more excellent !
 With naught Remorse can claim—nor Virtue scorn.

II

Thy cheek is pale with thought, but not from woe :
 And yet so lovely, that if Mirth could flush
 Its rose of whiteness with the brightest blush,
 My heart would wish away that ruder glow :
 And dazzle not thy deep-blue eyes—but, oh !
 While gazing on them sterner eyes will gush,
 And into mine my mother's weakness rush,
 Soft as the last drops round heaven's airy bow.
 For, through thy long dark lashes low depending,
 The soul of melancholy Gentleness
 Gleams like a seraph from the sky descending,
 Above all pain, yet pitying all distress ;
 At once such majesty with sweetness blending,
 I worship more, but can not love thee less.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

I SPEAK not, I trace not, I breathe not thy name;
 There is grief in the sound, there is guilt in the fame:
 But the tear which now burns on my cheek may impart
 The deep thoughts that dwell in that silence of heart.

Too brief for our passion, too long for our peace,
 Were those hours—can their joy or their bitterness cease?
 We repent, we abjure, we will break from our chain—
 We will part, we will fly to—unite it again!

Oh! thine be the gladness, and mine be the guilt!
 Forgive me, adored one!—forsake if thou wilt;
 But the heart which is thine shall expire undebased,
 And man shall not break it—whatever thou may'st.

And stern to the haughty, but humble to thee,
 This soul in its bitterest blackness shall be;
 And our days seem as swift, and our moments more sweet,
 With thee by my side, than with worlds at our feet.

One sigh of thy sorrow, one look of thy love,
 Shall turn me or fix, shall reward or reprove;
 And the heartless may wonder at all I resign—
 Thy lip shall reply, not to them, but to mine.

ADDRESS INTENDED TO BE RECITED AT THE
 CALEDONIAN MEETING, 1814

Who hath not glowed above the page where fame
 Hath fixed high Caledon's unconquered name;
 The mountain land which spurned the Roman chain,
 And baffled back the fiery-crested Dane:
 Whose bright claymore and hardihood of hand
 No foe could tame—no tyrant could command?
 That race is gone—but still their children breathe,
 And glory crowns them with redoubled wreath:
 O'er Gael and Saxon mingling banners shine,
 And, England! add their stubborn strength to thine.
 The blood which flowed with Wallace flows as free,
 But now 'tis only shed for fame and thee!
 Oh! pass not by the northern veteran's claim,
 But give support—the world hath given him fame!

The humbler ranks, the lowly brave, who bled
 While cheerly following where the mighty led—
 Who sleep beneath the undistinguished sod
 Where happier comrades in their triumph trod,
 To us bequeath—'tis all their fate allows—
 The sireless offspring and the lonely spouse:
 She on high Albyn's dusky hills may raise
 The tearful eye in melancholy gaze;
 Or view, while shadowy auguries disclose,
 The Highland seer's anticipated woes,
 The bleeding phantom of each martial form,
 Dim in the cloud, or darkling in the storm;
 While sad she chants the solitary song,
 The soft lament for him who tarries long—
 For him, whose distance relics vainly crave
 The coronach's wild requiem to the brave!

'Tis heaven—not man—must charm away the woe,
 Which burst when Nature's feelings newly flow,
 Yet tenderness and time may rob the tear
 Of half its bitterness, for one so dear;
 A nation's gratitude perchance may spread
 A thornless pillow for the widowed head;
 May lighten well her heart's maternal care,
 And wean from penury the soldier's heir.

FRAGMENT OF AN EPISTLE TO THOMAS MOORE

"WHAT say I?"—not a syllable further in prose;
 I'm your man "of all measures," dear Tom—so here goes!
 Here goes for a swim on the stream of old Time,
 On those buoyant supporters, the bladders of rhyme.
 If our weight breaks them down and we sink in the flood,
 We are smothered, at least, in respectable mud,
 Where the Divers of Bathos lie drowned in a heap,
 And Southey's last Pæan has pillowed his sleep—
 That "Felo-de-se," who, half drunk with his malmsey,
 Walked out of his depth and was lost in a calm sea,
 Singing "Glory to God" in a spick and span stanza,
 The like (since Tom Sternhold was choked) never man saw.

The papers have told you, no doubt, of the fusses,
 The fêtes, and the gapings to get at these Russes—
 Of his Majesty's suite, up from coachman to Hetman,
 And what dignity decks the flat face of the great man.

I saw him last week, at two balls and a party—
For a prince, his demeanour was rather too hearty.
You know we are used to quite different graces.

The Czar's look, I own, was much brighter and brisker,
But then he is sadly deficient in whisker;
And wore but a starless blue coat, and in Kersey-
mere breeches whisked round, in a waltz with the Jersey,
Who lovely as ever, seemed just as delighted
With Majesty's presence as those she invited.

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ELEGIAC STANZAS ON THE DEATH OF
SIR PETER PARKER, BART.¹²

THERE is a tear for all that die,
A mourner o'er the humblest grave;
But nations swell the funeral cry,
And triumph weeps above the brave.

For them is Sorrow's purest sigh
O'er ocean's heaving bosom sent:
In vain their bones unburied lie,
All earth becomes their monument!

A tomb is theirs on every page,
An epitaph on every tongue:
The present hours, the future age,
For them bewail, to them belong.

For them the voice of festal mirth
Grows hushed, their name the only sound;
While deep Remembrance pours to Worth
The goblet's tributary round.

A theme to crowds that knew them not;
Lamented by admiring foes,
Who would not share their glorious lot?
Who would not die the death they chose?

And, gallant Parker! thus enshrined
Thy life, thy fall, thy fame shall be;
And early valour, glowing, find
A model in thy memory.

But there are breasts that bleed with thee
 In woe, that glory can not quell;
 And shuddering hear of victory,
 Where one so dear, so dauntless, fell.

Where shall they turn to mourn thee less?
 When cease to hear thy cherished name?
 Time can not teach forgetfulness,
 While Grief's full heart is fed by Fame.

Alas! for them, though not for thee,
 They can not choose but weep the more;
 Deep for the dead the grief must be,
 Who ne'er gave cause to mourn before.

TO BELSHAZZAR

BELSHAZZAR! from the banquet turn,
 Nor in thy sensual fulness fall;
 Behold! while yet before thee burn
 The graven words, the glowing wall.
 Many a despot men miscall
 Crowned and anointed from on high;
 But thou, the weakest, worst of all—
 Is it not written, thou must die?

Go! dash the roses from thy brow—
 Gray hairs but poorly wreath with them;
 Youth's garlands misbecome thee now,
 More than thy very diadem,
 Where thou hast tarnished every gem—
 Then throw the worthless bauble by,
 Which, worn by thee, even slaves contemn;
 And learn like better men to die!

Oh! early in the balance weighed,
 And ever light of word and worth,
 Whose soul expired ere youth decayed,
 And left thee but a mass of earth.
 To see thee moves the scorner's mirth:
 But tears in Hope's averted eye
 Lament that even thou hadst birth—
 Unfit to govern, live, or die.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
 With a magic like thee;
 And like music on the waters
 Is thy sweet voice to me:
 When, as if its sound were causing
 The charmed ocean's pausing,
 The waves lie still and gleaming,
 And the lulled winds seem dreaming:

And the midnight moon is weaving
 Her bright chain o'er the deep;
 Whose breast is gently heaving,
 As an infant's sleep:
 So the spirit bows before thee,
 To listen and adore thee;
 With a full but soft emotion,
 Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

"O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
 Ducentium ortus ex animo: quater
 Felix! in imo qui scatentem
 Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit."

GRAY'S "POEMATA."

THERE'S not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,
 When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull decay;
 'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which fades
 so fast,
 But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of happiness
 Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess:
 The magnet of their course is gone, or only points in vain
 The shore to which their shivered sail shall never stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself comes
 down;
 It can not feel for others' woes, it dare not dream its own;
 That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of our tears,
 And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where the ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth distract the
breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more their former hope
of rest ;
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruined turret wreath,
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and gray beneath.

Oh ! could I feel as I have felt—or be what I have been,
Or weep as I could once have wept, o'er many a vanished scene ;
As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish though
they be,
So midst the withered waste of life, those tears would flow
to me.

DARKNESS

I HAD a dream, which was not all a dream :
The bright sun was extinguished, and the stars
Did wander darkling in the eternal space,
Rayless, and pathless ; and the icy earth
Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air ;
Morn came and went—and came, and brought no day,
And men forgot their passions in the dread
Of this their desolation ; and all hearts
Were chilled into a selfish prayer for light :
And they did live by watchfires—and the thrones,
The palaces of crowned kings—the huts,
The habitations of all things which dwell,
Were burnt for beacons ; cities were consumed,
And men were gathered round their blazing homes
To look once more into each other's face ;
Happy were those who dwelt within the eye
Of the volcanoes, and their mountain-torch :
A fearful hope was all the world contained ;
Forests were set on fire—but hour by hour
They fell and faded—and the crackling trunks
Extinguished with a crash—and all was black.
The brows of men by the despairing light
Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits
The flashes fell upon them ; some lay down
And hid their eyes and wept ; and some did rest
Their chins upon their clenched hands and smiled ;
And others hurried to and fro, and fed
Their funeral piles with fuel, and looked up
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,

The pall of a past world ; and then again
With curses cast them down upon the dust,
And gnashed their teeth and howled : the wild birds shrieked,
And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,
And flap their useless wings ; the wildest brutes
Came tame and tremulous ; and vipers crawled
And twined themselves among the multitude,
Hissing, but stingless—they were slain for food :
And War, which for a moment was no more,
Did glut himself again ;—a meal was bought
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart
Gorging himself in gloom : no love was left ;
All earth was but one thought—and that was death
Immediate and inglorious ; and the pang
Of famine fed upon all entrails—men
Died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh ;
The meagre by the meagre were devoured,
Even dogs assailed their masters, all save one,
And he was faithful to a corse, and kept
The birds and beasts and famished men at bay,
Till hunger clung them, or the dropping dead
Lured their lank jaws : himself sought out no food,
But with a piteous and perpetual moan,
And a quick desolate cry, licking the hand
Which answered not with a caress—he died.
The crowd was famished by degrees ; but two
Of an enormous city did survive,
And they were enemies : they met beside
The dying embers of an altar-place,
Where had been heaped a mass of holy things
For an unholy usage ; they raked up,
And shivering scraped with their cold skeleton hands
The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath
Blew for a little life, and made a flame
Which was a mockery ; then they lifted up
Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld
Each other's aspects—saw, and shrieked, and died—
Even of their mutual hideousness they died,
Unknowing who he was upon whose brow
Famine had written Fiend. The world was void,
The populous and the powerful was a lump,
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless,
A lump of death—a chaos of hard clay.
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
And nothing stirred within their silent depths ;
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
And their masts fell down piecemeal ; as they dropped,

They slept on the abyss without a surge—
 The waves were dead; the tides were in their grave,
 The Moon, their mistress, had expired before;
 The winds were withered in the stagnant air,
 And the clouds perished; Darkness had no need
 Of aid from them—She was the Universe!

MONODY ON THE DEATH OF THE RIGHT
 HON. R. B. SHERIDAN

SPOKEN AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE

WHEN the last sunshine of expiring day
 In summer's twilight weeps itself away,
 Who hath not felt the softness of the hour
 Sink on the heart, as dew along the flower?
 With a pure feeling which absorbs and awes
 While Nature makes that melancholy pause,
 Her breathing moment on the bridge where Time
 Of light and darkness forms an arch sublime,
 Who hath not shared that calm, so still and deep,
 The voiceless thought which would not speak but weep,
 A holy concord, and a bright regret,
 A glorious sympathy with suns that set?
 'Tis not harsh sorrow, but a tenderer woe,
 Nameless, but dear to gentle hearts below,
 Felt without bitterness, but full and clear,
 A sweet dejection, a transparent tear,
 Unmixed with worldly grief or selfish stain,
 Shed without shame, and secret without pain.

Even as the tenderness that hour instils
 When the summer's day declines along the hills,
 So feels the fulness of our hearts and eyes,
 When all of Genius which can perish dies.
 A mighty spirit is eclipsed—a power
 Hath passed from day to darkness—to whose hour
 Of light no likeness is bequeathed—no name,
 Focus at once of all the rays of Fame!
 The flash of Wit, the bright Intelligence,
 The beam of Song, the blaze of Eloquence,
 Set with their Sun, but still have left behind
 The enduring produce of immortal Mind;
 Fruits of a genial morn, and glorious noon,
 A deathless part of him who died too soon.

But small that portion of the wondrous whole,
These sparkling segments of that circling soul,
Which all embraced, and lightened over all,
To cheer, to pierce, to please, or to appal.
From the charmed council to the festive board,
Of human feelings the unbounded lord;
In whose acclaim the loftiest voices vied,
The praised, the proud, who made his praise their pride.
When the loud cry of trampled Hindostan
Arose to Heaven in her appeal from man,
His was the thunder, his the avenging rod,
The wrath—the delegated voice of God!
Which shook the nations through his lips, and blazed
Till vanquished senates trembled as they praised.

And here, oh! here, where yet all young and warm,
The gay creations of his spirit charm,
The matchless dialogue, the deathless wit,
Which knew not what it was to intermit;
The glowing portraits, fresh from life, that bring
Home to our hearts the truth from which they spring;
These wondrous beings of his fancy, wrought
To fulness by the fiat of his thought,
Here in their first abode you still may meet,
Bright with the hues of his Promethean heat;
A halo of the light of other days,
Which still the splendour of its orb betrays.

But should there be to whom the fatal blight
Of failing Wisdom yields a base delight,
Men who exult when minds of heavenly tone
Jar in the music which was born their own,
Still let them pause—ah! little do they know
That what to them seemed Vice might be but Woe.
Hard is his fate on whom the public gaze
Is fixed forever to detract or praise;
Repose denies her requiem to his name,
And Folly loves the martyrdom of Fame.
The secret enemy, whose sleepless eye
Stands sentinel, accuser, judge, and spy;
The foe, the fool, the jealous, and the vain,
The envious, who but breathe in others' pain—
Behold the host! delighting to deprave,
Who track the steps of glory to the grave,
Watch every fault that daring Genius owes
Half to the ardour which its birth bestows,
Distort the truth, accumulate the lie,

And pile the pyramid of Calumny !
These are his portion—but if joined to these
Gaunt Poverty should league with deep Disease ;
If the high spirit must forget to soar,
And stoop to strive with Misery at the door,
To soothe Indignity—and face to face
Meet sordid rage, and wrestle with Disgrace ;
To find in Hope but the renewed caress,
The serpent-fold of further Faithlessness—
If such may be the ills which men assail,
What marvel if at last the mightiest fail ?
Breasts to whom all the strength of feeling's given
Bear hearts electric—charged with fire from heaven,
Black with the rude collision, inly torn,
By clouds surrounded, and on whirlwinds borne,
Driven o'er the lowering atmosphere that nursed
Thoughts which have turned to thunder—scorch, and burst.

But far from us and from our mimic scene
Such things should be—if such have ever been ;
Ours be the gentler wish, the kinder task,
To give the tribute Glory need not ask,
To mourn the vanished beam, and add our mite
Of praise in payment of a long delight.
Ye Orators ! whom yet our councils yield,
Mourn for the veteran Hero of your field !
The worthy rival of the wondrous Three,¹³
Whose words werè sparks of Immortality !
Ye Bards ! to whom the Drama's Muse is dear,
He was your master—emulate him here !
Ye men of wit and social eloquence,
He was your brother—bear his ashes hence !
While powers of mind almost of boundless range,
Complete in kind, as various in their change ;
While Eloquence, Wit, Poesy, and Mirth,
That humbler Harmonist of care on Earth,
Survive within our souls—while lives our sense
Of pride in Merit's proud pre-eminence,
Long shall we seek his likeness, long in vain,
And turn to all of him which may remain,
Sighing that Nature formed but one such man,
And broke the die—in moulding Sheridan !

CHURCHILL'S GRAVE

I stood beside the grave of him who blazed
The comet of a season, and I saw
The humblest of all sepulchres, and gazed
With not the less of sorrow and of awe
On that neglected turf and quiet stone,
With name no clearer than the names unknown,
Which lay unread around it; and I asked
The Gardener of that ground, why it might be
That for this plant strangers his memory tasked,
Through the thick deaths of half a century?
And thus he answered: "Well, I do not know
Why frequent travellers turn to pilgrims so;
He died before my day of Sextonship,
And I had not the digging of this grave."
And is this all? I thought—and do we rip
The veil of Immortality, and crave
I know not what of honour and of light,
Through unborn ages, to endure this blight,
So soon, and so successless? As I said,
The Architect of all on which we tread,
For Earth is but a tombstone, did essay
To extricate remembrance from the clay,
Whose minglings might confuse a Newton's thought,
Were it not that all life must end in one,
Of which we are but dreamers—as he caught
As 'twere the twilight of a former Sun,
Thus spoke he: "I believe the man of whom
You wot, who lies in this selected tomb,
Was a most famous writer in his day,
And therefore travellers step from out their way
To pay him honour—and myself whate'er
Your honour pleases." Then most pleased I shook
From out my pocket's avaricious nook
Some certain coins of silver, which as 'twere
Perforce I gave this man, though I could spare,
So much but inconveniently:—Ye smile,
I see ye, ye profane ones! all the while,
Because my homely phrase the truth would tell.
You are the fools, not I; for I did dwell
With a deep thought, and with a softened eye,
On that old Sexton's natural homily,
In which there was Obscurity and Fame—
The Glory and the Nothing of a Name.

PROMETHEUS

TITAN! to whose immortal eyes
The sufferings of mortality,
Seen in their sad reality,
Were not as things that gods despise;
What was thy pity's recompense?
A silent suffering, and intense;
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain,
The agony they do not show,
The suffocating sense of woe,
Which speaks but in its loneliness,
And then is jealous lest the sky
Should have a listener, nor will sigh
Until his voice is echoless.

Titan! to thee the strife was given
Between the suffering and the will,
Which torture where they can not kill;
And in the inexorable Heaven,
And the deaf tyranny of Fate,
The ruling principle of Hate,
Which for its pleasure doth create
The things it may annihilate,
Refused thee even the boon to die:
The wretched gift eternity
Was thine—and thou hast borne it well.
All that the Thunderer wrung from thee
Was but the menace which flung back
On him the torments of thy rack;
The fate thou didst so well foresee,
But would not to appease him tell;
And in thy Silence was his Sentence,
And in his soul a vain repentance,
And evil dread so ill dissembled
That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

Thy godlike crime was to be kind,
To render with thy precepts less
The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen Man with his own mind;
But baffled as thou wert from high,
Still in thy patient energy,
In the endurance, and repulse
Of thine impenetrable Spirit,
Which Earth and Heaven could not convulse,

A mighty lesson we inherit :
 Thou art a symbol and a sign
 To mortals of their fate and force ;
 Like thee Man is in part divine,
 A troubled stream from a pure source ;
 And Man in portions can foresee
 His own funereal destiny ;
 His wretchedness, and his resistance,
 And his sad unallied existence :
 To which his Spirit may oppose
 Itself—and equal to all woes,
 And a firm will, and a deep sense
 Which even in torture can decry
 Its own concentrated recompense,
 Triumphant where it dares defy,
 And making Death a Victory !

A FRAGMENT

COULD I remount the river of my years
 To the first fountain of our smiles and tears,
 I would not trace again the stream of hours
 Between their outworn banks of withered flowers,
 But bid it flow as now—until it glides
 Into the number of the nameless tides.

.
 What is this Death ?—a quiet of the heart ?
 The whole of that of which we are a part ?
 For life is but a vision—what I see
 Of all that lives alone is life to me ;
 And being so—the absent are the dead,
 Who haunt us from tranquility, and spread
 A dreary shroud around us, and invest
 With sad remembrances our hours of rest.

The absent are the dead—for they are cold,
 And ne'er can be what once we did behold ;
 And they are changed, and cheerless—or if yet
 The unforgotten do not all forget,
 Since thus divided—equal must it be
 If the deep barrier be of earth, or sea ;
 It may be both—but one day end it must,
 In the dark union of insensate dust.

The under-earth inhabitants—are they
 But mingled millions decomposed to clay?
 The ashes of a thousand ages spread
 Wherever man has trodden or shall tread?
 Or do they in their silent cities dwell
 Each in his incommunicative cell?
 Or have they their own language? and a sense
 Of breathless being?—darkened and intense
 As midnight in her solitude?—O Earth!
 Where are the past?—and wherefore had they birth?
 The dead are thy inheritors—and we
 But bubbles on thy surface; and the key
 Of thy profundity is in the grave,
 The ebon portal of thy peopled cave,
 Where I would walk in spirit, and behold
 Our elements resolved to things untold,
 And fathom-hidden wonders, and explore
 The essence of great bosoms now no more.

.

SONNET TO LAKE LEMAN

ROUSSEAU—Voltaire—our Gibbon—and De Staël—
 Leman! these names are worthy of thy shore,¹⁴
 Thy shore of names like these! wert thou no more,
 Their memory thy remembrance would recall:
 To them thy banks were lovely as to all,
 But they have made them lovelier, for the lore
 Of mighty minds doth hallow in the core
 Of human hearts the ruin of a wall
 Where dwelt the wise and wondrous; but by thee,
 How much more, Lake of Beauty! do we feel,
 In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystal sea,
 The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,
 Which of the heirs of immortality
 Is proud, and make the breath of glory real!

—

A VERY MOURNFUL BALLAD

ON THE SIEGE AND CONQUEST OF ALHAMA

Which, in the Arabic language, is to the following purport

THE Moorish King rides up and down
 Through Granada's royal town;

From Elvira's gates to those
Of Bivarambla on he goes.
Woe is me, Alhama !

Letters to the monarch tell
How Alhama's city fell ;
In the fire the scroll he threw,
And the messenger he slew.
Woe is me, Alhama !

He quits his mule, and mounts his horse,
And through the street directs his course ;
Through the street of Zacatin
To the Alhambra spurring in.
Woe is me, Alhama !

When the Alhambra walls he gained,
On the moment he ordained
That the trumpet straight should sound
With the silver clarion round.
Woe is me, Alhama !

And when the hollow drums of war,
Beat the loud alarm afar,
That the Moors of town and plain
Might answer to the martial strain.
Woe is me, Alhama !

Then the Moors, by this aware
That bloody Mars recalled them there,
One by one, and two by two,
To a mighty squadron grew.
Woe is me, Alhama !

Out then spake an aged Moor
In these words the King before,
" Wherefore call on us, O King ?
What may mean this gathering ?"
Woe is me, Alhama !

" Friends ! ye have, alas ! to know
Of a most disastrous blow ;
That the Christians, stern and bold,
Have obtained Alhama's hold."
Woe is me, Alhama !

Out then spake old Alfaqui,
With his beard so white to see :

“Good King! thou art justly served,
Good King! this thou hast deserved.
Woe is me, Alhama!

“By thee were slain, in evil hour,
The Abencerrage, Granada's flower;
And strangers were received by thee
Of Cordova the Chivalry.
Woe is me, Alhama!

“And for this, O King! is sent
On thee a double chastisement:
Thee and thine, thy crown and realm,
One last wreck shall overwhelm.
Woe is me, Alhama!

“He who holds no laws in awe,
He must perish by the law;
And Granada must be won,
And thyself with her undone.”
Woe is me, Alhama!

Fire flashed from out the old Moor's eyes,
The Monarch's wrath began to rise,
Because he answered, and because
He spake exceeding well of laws.
Woe is me, Alhama!

“There is no law to say such things
As may disgust the ear of kings”:
Thus, snorting with his choler, said
The Moorish King, and doomed him dead.
Woe is me, Alhama!

Moor Alfaqui! Moor Alfaqui!
Though thy beard so hoary be,
The King has sent to have thee seized,
For Alhama's loss displeased.
Woe is me Alhama!

And to fix thy head upon
High Alhambra's loftiest stone;
That this for thee should be the law,
And others tremble when they saw.
Woe is me, Alhama!

“Cavalier, and man of worth!
Let these words of mine go forth!

Let the Moorish Monarch know,
That to him I nothing owe.

Woe is me, Alhama !

“ But on my soul Alhama weighs,
And on my inmost spirit preys ;
And if the King his land hath lost,
Yet others may have lost the most.

Woe is me Alhama !

“ Sires have lost their children, wives
Their lords, and valiant men their lives ;
One what best his love might claim
Hath lost, another wealth, or fame.

Woe is me, Alhama !

“ I lost a damsel in that hour,
Of all the land the loveliest flower ;
Doubloons a hundred I would pay,
And think her ransom cheap that day.”

Woe is me, Alhama !

And as these things the old Moor said,
They severed from the trunk his head ;
And to the Alhambra's wall with speed
’Twas carried, as the King decreed.

Woe is me, Alhama !

And men and infants therein weep
Their loss, so heavy and so deep ;
Granada's ladies, all she rears
Within her walls, burst into tears.

Woe is me, Alhama !

And from the windows o'er the walls
The sable web of mourning falls ;
The King weeps as a woman o'er
His loss, for it is much and sore.

Woe is me, Alhama !

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

THEY say that Hope is happiness ;
But genuine Love must prize the past,
And Memory wakes the thoughts that bless :
They rose the first—they set the last ;

And all that Memory loves the most
 Was once our only Hope to be,
 And all that Hope adored and lost
 Hath melted into Memory.

Alas! it is delusion all;
 The future cheats us from afar,
 Nor can we be what we recall,
 Nor dare we think of what we are.

TO THOMAS MOORE

My boat is on the shore,
 And my bark is on the sea;
 But, before I go, Tom Moore,
 Here's a double health to thee!

Here's a sigh to those who love me,
 And a smile to those who hate;
 And, whatever sky's above me,
 Here's a heart for every fate.

Though the ocean roar around me,
 Yet it still shall bear me on;
 Though a desert should surround me,
 It hath springs that may be won.

Were't the last drop in the well,
 As I gasped upon the brink,
 Ere my fainting spirit fell,
 'Tis to thee that I would drink.

With that water, as this wine,
 The libation I would pour
 Should be—Peace with thine and mine,
 And a health to thee, Tom Moore.

TO SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.¹⁵

ABSENT or present, still to thee,
 My friend, what magic spells belong!
 As all can tell, who share, like me,
 In turn thy converse and thy song.

But when the dreaded hour shall come,
By Friendship ever deemed too nigh,
And "Memory" o'er her Druid's tomb
Shall weep that aught of thee can die,

How fondly will she then repay
Thy homage offered at her shrine,
And blend, while ages roll away,
Her name immortally with thine!

ON THE BUST OF HELEN BY CANOVA

In this beloved marble view,
Above the works and thoughts of man,
What Nature could, but would not, do,
And beauty and Canova can!
Beyond imagination's power,
Beyond the Bard's defeated art,
With immortality her dower,
Behold the Helen of the heart!

SO, WE'LL GO NO MORE A ROVING

So, we'll go no more a roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a roving
By the light of the moon.

TO MR. MURRAY

STRAHAN, Tonson, Lintot of the times,
Patron and publisher of rhymes,
For thee the bard up Pindus climbs,
My Murray.

And every monument the stranger meets,
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets ;
And even the Lion all subdued appears,
And the harsh sound of the barbarian drum,
With dull and daily dissonance, repeats
The echo of thy tyrant's voice along
The soft waves, once all musical to song,
That heaved beneath the moonlight with the throng
Of gondolas—and to the busy hum
Of cheerful creatures, whose most sinful deeds
Were but the overbeating of the heart,
And flow of too much happiness, which needs
The aid of age to turn its course apart
From the luxuriant and voluptuous flood
Of sweet sensations, battling with the blood.
But these are better than the gloomy errors,
The weeds of nations in their last decay,
When Vice walks forth with her unsoftened terrors,
And Mirth is madness, and but smiles to slay ;
And Hope is nothing but a false delay,
The sick man's lightning half an hour ere death,
When Faintness, the last mortal birth of Pain,
And apathy of limb, the dull beginning
Of the cold staggering race which Death is winning,
Steals vein by vein and pulse by pulse away ;
Yet so relieving the o'er-tortured clay,
To him appears renewal of his breath,
And freedom the mere numbness of his chain ;
And then he talks of life, and how again
He feels his spirit soaring—albeit weak,
And of the fresher air, which he would seek :
And as he whispers knows not that he gasps,
That his thin finger feels not what it clasps,
And so the film comes o'er him, and the dizzy
Chamber swims round and round, and shadows busy,
At which he vainly catches, flit and gleam,
Till the last rattle chokes the strangled scream,
And all is ice and blackness—and the earth
That which it was the moment ere our birth.

II

There is no hope for nations !—Search the page
Of many thousand years—the daily scene,
The flow and ebb of each recurring age,
The everlasting to be which hath been,
Hath taught us naught, or little : still we lean
On things that rot beneath our weight, and wear

Our strength away in wrestling with the air ;
 For 'tis our nature strikes us down : the beasts
 Slaughtered in hourly hecatombs for feasts
 Are of as high an order—they must go
 Even where their driver goads them, though to slaughter.
 Ye men, who pour your blood for kings as water,
 What have they given your children in return ?
 A heritage of servitude and woes,
 A blindfold bondage, where your hire is blows.
 What ! do not yet the red-hot ploughshares burn,
 O'er which you stumble in a false ordeal,
 And deem this proof of royalty the real ;
 Kissing the hand that guides you to your scars,
 And glorying as you tread the glowing bars ?
 All that your sires have left you, all that Time
 Bequeaths of free, and History of sublime,
 Spring from a different theme ! Ye see and read,
 Admire and sigh, and then succumb and bleed !
 Save the few spirits who, despite of all,
 And worse than all, the sudden crimes engendered
 By the down-thundering of the prison-wall,
 And thirst to swallow the sweet waters tendered,
 Gushing from Freedom's fountains, when the crowd,
 Maddened with centuries of drought, are loud,
 And trample on each other to obtain
 The cup which brings oblivion of a chain
 Heavy and sore, in which long yoked they ploughed
 The sand—or if there sprung the yellow grain,
 'Twas not for them, their necks were too much bowed,
 And their dead palates chewed the cud of pain :
 Yes ! the few spirits—who, despite of deeds
 Which they abhor, confound not with the cause
 Those momentary starts from Nature's laws,
 Which, like the pestilence and earthquake, smite
 But for a term, then pass, and leave the earth
 With all her seasons to repair the blight
 With a few summers, and again put forth
 Cities and generations—fair, when free—
 For, Tyranny, there blooms no bud for thee !

III

Glory and Empire ! once upon these towers
 With Freedom—godlike Triad ! how ye sate !
 The league of mightiest nations, in those hours
 When Venice was an envy, might abate,
 But did not quench her spirit ; in her fate
 All were enwrapped : the feasted monarchs knew

And loved their hostess, nor could learn to hate,
Although they humbled—with the kingly few
The many felt, for from all days and climes
She was the voyager's worship; even her crimes
Were of the softer order—born of Love,
She drank no blood, nor fattened on the dead,
But gladdened where her harmless conquests spread;
For these restored the Cross, that from above
Hallowed her sheltering banners, which incessant
Flew between earth and the unholy Crescent,
Which, if it waned and dwindled, Earth may thank
The city it has clothed in chains, which clank
Now, creaking in the ears of those who owe
The name of Freedom to her glorious struggles;
Yet she but shares with them a common woe,
And called the "kingdom" of a conquering foe,
But knows what all—and, most of all, we know—
With what set gilded terms a tyrant juggles!

IV

The name of Commonwealth is past and gone
O'er the three fractions of the groaning globe;
Venice is crushed, and Holland deigns to own
A sceptre, and endures the purple robe;
If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone
His chainless mountains, 'tis but for a time,
For tyranny of late is cunning grown,
And in its own good season tramples down
The sparkles of our ashes. One great clime,
Whose vigorous offspring by dividing ocean
Are kept apart and nursed in the devotion
Of Freedom, which their fathers fought for, and
Bequeathed—a heritage of heart and hand,
And proud distinction from each other land,
Whose sons must bow them at a monarch's motion,
As if his senseless sceptre were a wand
Full of the magic of exploded science—
Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,
Yet rears her crest, unconquered and sublime,
Above the far Atlantic!—she has taught
Her Esau-brethren that the haughty flag,
The floating fence of Albion's feeblcr crag,
May strike to those whose red right hands have bought
Rights cheaply earned with blood. Still, still forever,
Better, though each man's life-blood were a river,
That it should flow, and overflow, than creep
Through thousand lazy channels in our veins,

Dammed like the dull canal with locks and chains,
 And moving as a sick man in his sleep,
 Three paces, and then faltering—better be
 Where the extinguished Spartans still are free,
 In their proud charnel of Thermopylæ,
 Than stagnate in our marsh—or o'er the deep
 Fly, and one current to the ocean add,
 One spirit to the souls our fathers had,
 One freeman more, America, to thee!

STANZAS TO THE PO

RIVER, that rollest by the ancient walls,
 Where dwells the lady of my love, when she
 Walks by thy brink, and there perchance recalls
 A faint and fleeting memory of me;

What if thy deep and ample stream should be
 A mirror of my heart, where she may read
 The thousand thoughts I now betray to thee,
 Wild as thy wave, and headlong as thy speed!

What do I say—a mirror of my heart?
 Are not thy waters sweeping, dark, and strong?
 Such as my feelings were and are, thou art;
 And such as thou art were my passions long.

Time may have somewhat tamed them—not forever;
 Thou overflow'st thy banks, and not for aye
 Thy bosom overboils, congenial river!
 Thy floods subside, and mine have sunk away,

But left long wrecks behind, and now again,
 Borne on our old unchanged career, we move;
 Thou tendest wildly onward to the main,
 And I—to loving one I should not love.

The current I behold will sweep beneath
 Her native walls, and murmur at her feet;
 Her eyes will look on thee, when she shall breathe
 The twilight air, unharmed by summer's heat.

She will look on thee—I have looked on thee,
 Full of that thought: and from that moment, ne'er
 Thy waters could I dream of, name, or see,
 Without the inseparable sigh for her!

Her bright eyes will be imaged in thy stream,
Yes! they will meet the wave I gaze on now :
Mine can not witness, even in a dream,
That happy wave repass me in its flow!

The wave that bears my tears returns no more :
Will she return by whom that wave shall sweep?
Both tread thy banks, both wander on thy shore,
I by thy source, she by the dark-blue deep.

But that which keepeth us apart is not
Distance, nor depth of wave, nor space of earth,
But the distraction of a various lot,
As various as the climates of our birth.

A stranger loves the lady of the land,
Born far beyond the mountains, but his blood
Is all meridian, as if never fanned
By the black wind that chills the polar flood.

My blood is all meridian, were it not,
I had not left my clime, nor should I be,
In spite of tortures ne'er to be forgot,
A slave again of love—at least of thee.

'Tis vain to struggle—let me perish young—
Live as I lived, and love as I have loved :
To dust if I return, from dust I sprung,
And then, at least, my heart can ne'er be moved.

STANZAS

WHEN a man hath no freedom to fight for at home,
Let him combat for that of his neighbours;
Let him think of the glories of Greece and of Rome,
And get knocked on the head for his labours.

To do good to mankind is the chivalrous plan,
And is always as nobly requited;
Then battle for freedom wherever you can,
And, if not shot or hanged, you'll get knighted.

THE IRISH AVATAR

"And Ireland, like a bastinadoed elephant, kneeling to receive the paltry rider."—CURRAN.

ERE the daughter of Brunswick is cold in her grave,
And her ashes still float to their home o'er the tide,
Lo! George the triumphant speeds over the wave,
To the long-cherished isle which he loved like his—bride!

True, the great of her bright and brief era are gone,
The rainbow-like epoch where Freedom could pause
For the few little years, out of centuries won,
Which betrayed not, or crushed not, or wept not her cause.

True, the chains of the Catholic clank o'er his rags,
The castle still stands, and the senate's no more,
And the famine which dwelt on her freedomless crags
Is extending its step to her desolate shore.

To her desolate shore—where the emigrant stands
For a moment to gaze ere he flies from his hearth;
Tears fall on his chain, though it drops from his hands,
For the dungeon he quits is the place of his birth.

But he comes! the Messiah of royalty comes!
Like a goodly Leviathan rolled from the waves;
Then receive him as best such an advent becomes,
With a legion of cooks and an army of slaves!

He comes in the promise and bloom of threescore,
To perform in the pageant the sovereign's part—
But long live the shamrock, which shadows him o'er!
Could the green in his hat be transferred to his heart!

Could that long-withered spot but be verdant again,
And a new spring of noble affections arise—
Then might freedom forgive thee this dance in thy chain,
And this shout of thy slavery which saddens the skies.

Is it madness or meanness which clings to thee now?
Were he God—as he is but the commonest clay,
With scarce fewer wrinkles than sins on his brow—
Such servile devotion might shame him away.

Ay, roar in his train! let thine orators lash
Their fanciful spirits to pamper his pride—
Not thus did thy Grattan indignantly flash
His soul o'er the freedom implored and denied.

Ever-glorious Grattan! the best of the good!
So simple in heart, so sublime in the rest!
With all which Demosthenes wanted endued,
And his rival or victor in all he possessed.

Ere Tully arose in the zenith of Rome,
Though unequalled, preceded, the task was begun—
But Grattan sprung up like a god from the tomb
Of ages, the first, last, the saviour, the one!

With the skill of an Orpheus to soften the brute;
With the fire of Prometheus to kindle mankind;
Even Tyranny listening sate melted or mute,
And Corruption shrunk scorched from the glance of his mind.

But back to our theme! Back to despots and slaves!
Feasts furnished by Famine! rejoicings by Pain!
True freedom but welcomes, while slavery still raves,
When a week's saturnalia hath loosened her chain.

Let the poor squalid splendour thy wreck can afford
(As the bankrupt's profusion his ruin would hide),
Gild over the palace, Lo! Erin, thy lord!
Kiss his foot with thy blessing, his blessings denied!

Or if freedom past hope be extorted at last,
If the idol of brass find his feet are of clay,
Must what terror or policy wring forth be classed
With what monarchs ne'er give, but as wolves yield their prey?

Each brute hath its nature; a king's is to reign—
To reign! in that word see, ye ages, comprised
The cause of the curses all annals contain,
From Cæsar the dreaded to George the despised!

Wear, Fingal, thy trapping! O'Connell, proclaim
His accomplishments! His!!! and thy country convince
Half an age's contempt was an error of fame,
And that "Hal is the rascaliest, sweetest young prince!"

Will thy yard of blue ribbon, poor Fingal, recall
The fetters from millions of Catholic limbs?
Or, has it not bound thee the fastest of all
The slaves, who now hail their betrayer with hymns?

Ay! "Build him a dwelling!" let each give his mite!
Till, like Babel, the new royal dome hath arisen!
Let thy beggars and helots their pittance unite—
And a palace bestow for a poor-house and prison!

Spread—spread, for Vitellius, the royal repast,
Till the gluttonous despot be stuffed to the gorge!
And the roar of his drunkards proclaim him at last
The fourth of the fools and oppressors called “George!”

Let the tables be loaded with feasts till they groan!
Till they groan like thy people, through ages of woe!
Let the wine flow around the old Bacchanal’s throne,
Like their blood which has flowed and which yet has to flow.

But let not his name be thine idol alone—
On his right hand behold a Sejanus appears!
Thine own Castlereagh! let him still be thine own!
A wretch never named but with curses and jeers!

Till now, when the isle which should blush for his birth,
Deep, deep as the gore which he shed on her soil,
Seems proud of the reptile which crawled from her earth,
And for murder repays him with shouts and a smile.

Without one single ray of her genius, without
The fancy, the manhood, the fire of her race—
The miscreant who well might plunge Erin in doubt
If she ever gave birth to a being so base.

If she did—let her long-boasted proverb be hushed,
Which proclaims that from Erin no reptile can spring—
See the cold-blooded serpent, with venom full flushed,
Still warming its folds in the breast of a king!

Shout, drink, feast, and flatter! O Erin, how low
Wert thou sunk by misfortune and tyranny, till
Thy welcome of tyrants hath plunged thee below
The depth of thy deep in a deeper gulf still!

My voice, though but humble, was raised for thy right,
My vote, as a freeman’s, still voted thee free,
This hand, though but feeble, would arm in thy fight,
And this heart, though outworn, had a throb still for thee!

Yes, I loved thee and thine, though thou art not my land,
I have known noble hearts and great souls in thy sons,
And I wept with the world, o’er the patriot band
Who are gone, but I weep them no longer as once.

For happy are they now reposing afar—
Thy Grattan, thy Curran, thy Sheridan, all
Who, for years, were the chiefs in the eloquent war,
And redeemed, if they have not retarded, thy fall.

Yes, happy are they in their cold English graves!
 Their shades can not start to thy shouts of to-day—
 Nor the steps of enslavers and chain-kissing slaves
 Be stamped in the turf o'er their fetterless clay.

Till now I had envied thy sons and their shore,
 Though their virtues were hunted, their liberties fled;
 There was something so warm and sublime in the core
 Of an Irishman's heart, that I envy—thy dead.

Or, if aught in my bosom can quench for an hour
 My contempt for a nation so servile, though sore,
 Which though trod like the worm will not turn upon power,
 'Tis the glory of Grattan, and genius of Moore!

September, 1821.

ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,
 Since others it hath ceased to move;
 Yet, though I can not be beloved,
 Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf;
 The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
 The worm, the canker, and the grief
 Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys
 Is lone as some volcanic isle;
 No torch is kindled at its blaze—
 A funeral pile.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
 The exalted portion of the pain
 And power of love, I can not share,
 But wear the chain.

But 'tis not thus—and 'tis not here—
 Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor now,
 Where glory decks the hero's bier,
 Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner, and the field,
 Glory and Greece, around me see!
 The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
 Was not more free.

Awake! (not Greece—she is awake!)
 Awake, my spirit! Think through whom
 Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
 And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down,
 Unworthy manhood!—unto thee
 Indifferent should the smile or frown
 Of beauty be.

If thou regrettest thy youth, why live?
 The land of honourable death
 Is here:—up to the field, and give
 Away thy breath!

Seek out—less often sought than found—
 A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
 Then look around, and choose thy ground,
 And take thy rest.

MISSOLOGHI, January 22, 1824.

NOTES

¹ Mrs. Musters, formerly Mary Chaworth.

² Mrs. Spencer Smith.

³ On the 3d of May, 1816, while the *Salsette* (Captain Bathurst) was lying in the Dardanelles, Lieutenant Ekenhead, of that frigate, and the writer of these rhymes, swam from the European shore to the Asiatic—by the bye, from Abydos to Sestos would have been more correct. The whole distance from the place whence we started to our landing on the other side, including the length we were carried by the current, was computed by those on board the frigate at upward of four English miles, though the actual breadth is barely one. The rapidity of the current is such that no boat can row directly across; and it may, in some measure, be estimated from the circumstance of the whole distance being accomplished by one of the parties in an hour and five, and by the other in an hour and ten minutes. The water was extremely cold, from the melting of the mountain snows. About three weeks before, in April, we had made an attempt; but having ridden all the way from the Troad the same morning, and the water being of an icy chilliness, we found it necessary to postpone the completion till the frigate anchored below the castles, when we swam the straits, as just stated, entering a considerable way above the European and landing below the Asiatic fort. Chevalier says that a young Jew swam the same distance for his mistress, and Oliver mentions its having been done by a Neapolitan; but our consul, Tarragona, remembered neither of these circumstances, and tried to dissuade us from the attempt. A number of the *Salsette's* crew were known to have accomplished a greater distance; and the only thing that surprised me was that, as doubts had been entertained of the truth of Leander's story, no traveller had ever endeavoured to ascertain its practicability.

⁴ Romaic expression of tenderness: if I translate it, I shall affront the gentlemen, as it may seem that I suppose they could not; and if I do not, I may affront the ladies. For fear of any misconstruction on the part of

the latter, I shall do so, begging pardon of the learned. It means, "My life, I love you!" which sounds very prettily in all languages, and is as much in fashion in Greece at this day as (Juvenal tells us) the first two words were among the Roman ladies, whose erotic expressions were all Hellenized.

⁵ In the East (where ladies are not taught to write, lest they should scribble assignations), flowers, cinders, pebbles, etc., convey the sentiments of the parties by that universal deputy of Mercury—an old woman. A cinder says, "I burn for thee"; a bunch of flowers tied with hair, "Take me and fly"; but a pebble declares—what nothing else can.

⁶ Constantinople.

⁷ The song was written by Riga, who perished in the attempt to revolutionize Greece. This translation is as literal as the author could make it in verse. It is of the same measure as that of the original.

⁸ Constantinople.

⁹ The Princess Charlotte.

¹⁰ Saturday, October 10, 1812. [The Theatre in Drury Lane, which was opened in 1747, with Dr. Johnson's masterly address beginning—

"When Learning's triumph o'er her barbarous foes

First reared the stage, immortal Shakespeare rose, and witnessed the last glories of Garrick, having fallen into decay, was rebuilt in 1794. The new building perished by fire in 1811; and the managers, in their anxiety that the opening of the present edifice should be distinguished by some composition of at least equal merit, advertised in the newspapers for a general competition. Scores of addresses, not one tolerable, showered on their desk, and they were in sad despair, when Lord Holland interfered, and, not without difficulty, prevailed on Lord Byron to write these verses—"at the risk," as he said, "of offending a hundred scribblers and a discerning public." The admirable *jeu d'esprit* of James and Horace Smith will long preserve the memory of the "Rejected Addresses."]

¹¹ Sheridan.

¹² Killed in battle at Moorfields, Maryland, August 30, 1814.

¹³ Fox, Pitt, Burke.

¹⁴ Geneva, Ferney, Copet, Lausanne.

¹⁵ Written on a blank leaf of the "Pleasures of Memory."

¹⁶ [The "Ode on Venice" was written during the period of Byron's residence in the "city of a hundred isles," in 1818. Shelley, who visited him at that period, used to say that all he observed of the workings of Byron's mind during his visit, gave him a far higher idea of its powers than he had ever before entertained.

The city, the history of which is so full of romantic and poetic incidents, suggested also the poet's two dramas, "Marino Faliero" and the "Two Foscari."

The lament for the lost glory of the Ocean Queen has happily not proved prophetic.

"There is no Hope for Nations," can not be said of the ransomed Venetia, who shared the hopes, the energies, and the future of young Italy. There was something prosaic, and like this workaday nineteenth century, in the means employed for her deliverance; but the origin of her freedom may be traced back to the fields of Magenta and Solferino, red with the best blood of her brethren.]



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THE END





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